Labour Strife
in the
South Wales Coalfield
1910-1911.

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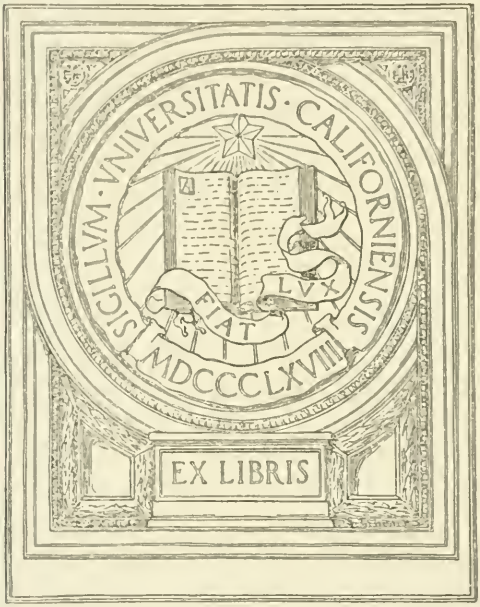

IV A. 4

Labour Strife in the South Wales Coalfield 1910-1911.

A Historical and Critical Record of the Mid-Rhondda, Aberdare Valley and other Strikes.

BY

DAVID EVANS.

1911.

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PREFACE.

The main purpose of this book is to give an authentic narrative of the strife in the South Wales coalfield between September, 1910, and November, 1911. In their violence, and in the numbers of the workmen directly affected by them, the sectional strikes which took place during that comparatively brief period were unprecedented. They were noteworthy, also, for a struggle for supremacy in leadership and in policy more prolonged and embittered than in any previous struggle in the history of organised labour in the coalfield. Some of the opinions expressed in the course of the telling of the story of the great Cambrian Combine and the Aberdare Valley strikes may probably provoke criticism; but in its statement of facts the narrative is based almost exclusively on official records.

THE AUTHOR.

Cardiff,

Nov. 30th, 1911.

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CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN OF THE CAMBRIAN AND OTHER DISPUTES.

Introductory.—Causes of Unrest.—Political, Personal and Economic.—The Cambrian trouble.—History of Naval Colliery Ely Pit Dispute.—Why the Pit was closed.—Conciliation Board intervention.—Owners' original offer.—Why and how price-lists are made.—Crux of the Naval difficulty.—Suggested outside arbitration.—Workmen's reservations.—Suggestion rejected by Coalowners' Association.—General Unrest.—Naval workmen's appeal to the coalfield.—Workmen's statements denied by Management.—Price-list controversy.—Affected miners' boycott of the disputed seam.—Extension of Naval stoppage.—Miners' Conference authorises a ballot on general or Cambrian Combine strike.—Conference decision ignored.—A one day's strike of all Cambrian Combine collieries.—Result of ballot.—Negociations resumed.—Service of Notices.—General situation critical.—Over 30,000 workmen idle or under notice.—Settlement of October 22nd.—Terms recommended by Mabon and Mr. D. Watts Morgan.—Naval workmen's alleged assent to the settlement.—Terms rejected.—Troubles in the Aberdare and Llynvi Valleys.—Mr. Stanton and Mr. Hann.—A notorious message.—Disregard of its obligations by South Wales Miners' Federation.—Violations of Rules.—Last abortive effort to avoid the Cambrian Combine strike.—Executive Council's dissensions.—The Strike a virtual boycott.

Introductory. In the autumn of 1910 the mining industry of South Wales entered upon one of the most troublous and tumultuous periods in the whole of its chequered history. The distinguishing features of the struggle were the sectional nature of the strikes which accompanied, and the manifold nature of the causes which produced, it. The causes were no less personal and political than they were industrial and economic. For over 18 months prior to the outbreak at the mid-Rhondda collieries of the Cambrian Colliery Combine a severe contest for supremacy had been waged between the younger and the older leaders of the South Wales Miners' Federation. The younger leaders were Socialists imbued with Communistic theories concerning the relations of Capital and Labour, and the older leaders were orthodox trade unionists. The points of conflict between the two sets of leaders and the two schools of thought which they represented will be indicated in the course of the narrative which follows. Here

it is enough to state that the rivalry between them led to disruption, to insubordination among the rank and file of the South Wales Miners' Federation, and to the spread among the miners of Utopian ideas regarding the rights and privileges of Labour, and that these consequences were largely responsible for the continuance, if not for the origin, of the strikes themselves. The influence of economic causes was a comparatively restricted one; and it is probable that had that been the only influence at work the peace of the South Wales coalfield would not have been disturbed to the extent it was. During the controversy provoked by the seamen's and railwaymen's strikes of the summer of 1911 it was the fashion to attribute the unrest of the workmen to the claim that during recent years the cost of living had increased in a greater proportion than wages. However true that statement might have been in its general application it was not true concerning the wage of the South Wales miner; for while in 1895 the Welsh miner was receiving 16.77 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879 on an average output of 304 tons per annum, he was paid in 1910 an average percentage of 49.68 above the 1879 standard on an average output of 268 tons. In that period the average output decreased 11½ per cent., while the general percentage was 32.91 per cent. higher—an increase which considerably more than balanced the diminished production, and the increase in the cost of food.* For these reasons the influence of the economic factor must be traced in other directions. It is to be found in the fact that, in the course of the two years preceding the outbreak in the Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys, the general average wage rate had fallen from 60 per cent. to 49.68 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879, and that contemporaneously

*NOTE.—The following table gives the comparative quinquennial index figures of the wages of colliers employed in the South Wales coalfield on tonnage or piece rates and of other miners employed on day wages, and of Professor Bowley, sindex figures of the wages of working classes generally, and of retail food prices since 1879.

	Retail Food Prices.	General Wages.	Output per person employed underground.	Colliers' Wages.*	Wages of Colliery Daymen.
1879 ...	–	–	316	100	100
1880–84 ...	122	102	360	118	103
1885–89 ...	98	103	339	108	101
1890–94 ...	96	115	309	122	120
1895–99 ...	93	118	310	106	107
1900–04 ...	96	126	313	141	147
1905–09 ...	98	127	302	131	134

In arriving at these figures it has been assumed that the base rates of 1879, on the average output of that year, yielded the collier an average wage of £1 10s. per week. Since 1879 it is estimated that base rates have been increased from 7 to 10 per cent; but no allowance has been made for this increase in the index figures of the wages of the South Wales miners.

Wages and Cost of Food.

with this fall in the average percentage there had been in many cases a diminution in base earnings owing to the operation of the Eight Hours Act. The base earnings of the collier were adversely affected by the fact that the restriction in the working hours prevented him increasing his output as he had been in the habit of doing when general percentages were moving downwards, while those of the day wagemen suffered because of the operation of the clause in the Act disallowing overtime except in cases of emergency, and of the discontinuance of other customs possessing a wage value. Coming immediately, as these restrictions did, after a period of 18 months during which the miners had been receiving the maximum percentage of 60 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879, they accentuated the effects of the reductions in the general wage. The reduced wages rendered impossible the maintenance of the standard of spending to which the workmen had become accustomed during the period they had been in receipt of the maximum wage rate; and it was in that sense the economic factor contributed to the unrest. Intrinsically, however, it would not have produced any serious trouble. As a matter of fact it did not produce any general discontent. In the one case where it was the main cause of a stoppage of work an agreement was quickly arrived at between the workmen and their employers, and the strike did not last a week. The serious troubles took place in districts where the political, personal and local factors predominated; and the worst of those serious troubles occurred in the two districts where the hostility of the rank and file to the old leaders was most bitter, and insubordination most rampant; where Socialism had made its greatest progress; and where friction between the workmen and their employers over matters of discipline and management were most acute. Those two districts were mid-Rhondda—where, since 1907, the Naval and Glamorgan collieries as well as the Britannic collieries, Gilfach Goch, had changed hands and fallen under the centralised control of the Cambrian Combine—and Aberdare.

Origin of Cambrian Combine Strike.

The dispute at the Cambrian Combine collieries originated in a failure on the part of the South Wales Coal Trade Conciliation Board to settle a price-list for the Upper Five Foot Seam at the Ely pit of the Naval Colliery Company. Two other seams at that pit were approaching exhaustion; they did not yield satisfactory results; and the Company had for some time felt that the only method by which they could hope to work the pit remuneratively was the opening out of the Upper Five Feet Seam under piece-rate labour conditions. The Naval Colliery had never been a very profitable undertaking. In a pamphlet entitled "The Industrial Struggle in mid-Rhondda," published in

January, 1911, Mr. D. A. Thomas, managing director of the Cambrian Combine collieries, and chairman of the Naval Co., made the following statement concerning its past history:—

> "The Naval collieries have had a very chequered career since they were first started, some 30 odd years ago. For the first ten or twelve years their history was a succession of failure and disaster. I am informed by a near relative of the original proprietors, who is in a position to speak with authority, that they were practically ruined, having lost altogether about £200,000 in the collieries, and that their premature deaths must be attributed to their financial misfortunes. The undertaking has changed hands several times, and on each occasion, except the last, I believe, at considerable sacrifice to the vendors.
>
> "I have not been able to obtain the figures relating to profit and loss prior to 1888, and therefore cannot make the statement positively, but I have every reason to believe that if the annual profits and losses since coal was first raised were set off against one another, there would be a heavy balance on the debit side, and that too, without making allowance for depreciation by reason of the gradual exhaustion of the coal in the property. In other words, this important undertaking, on which hundreds of thousands have been spent, which produces Admiralty coal of the best description for which the highest price is obtained, and which has found employment for over 2,000 workmen at wages, which, I believe, rank among the highest paid to any colliers in the United Kingdom, or, for that matter, in Europe (for the whole period of eight months preceding the strike they averaged 7/7.63 per collier per day of eight hours), has, taking one year with another, been worked, since its commencement nearly a generation ago, at an actual loss to the shareholders."

In that same pamphlet Mr. Thomas described his own position in the following words:—"My chief interest in the Company is just this: I have been appointed chairman and managing director. As such I regard myself as in a fiduciary position in relation to the shareholders, and I intend to do my best for them, having due regard to the fair and reasonable claims of the workmen. If I did not endeavour to the best of my ability to safeguard the interests of those who have shown their confidence in me by placing me in this position of trust, I should very properly lay myself open to the charge of having proved an unjust steward." The writer has thought it pertinent to quote this personal passage because it sounds the keynote of the attitude adopted by the Naval Company before the strike began and

resolutely maintained by the Company throughout the whole length of that disastrous struggle. The property was good enough to yield its proprietors a return in annual income commensurate with the capital sunk and the risks involved ; the Company were determined to make every reasonable effort to secure that return ; and with that end in view they conveyed an intimation to the workmen that they intended to develop the Upper Five Feet Seam and work it on a tonnage basis.

Original Conciliation Board Offer.

Negociations were opened between the management and the workmen's representatives ; they dragged on for some months; and on December 16th, 1909, in accordance with the provisions of the Wages Agreement, two representatives of the Conciliation Board, namely, Mr. T. Griffiths, on behalf of the coalowners, and Mr. Enoch Morrell on behalf of the workmen, were appointed to deal with the dispute, with power to settle. On June 8th, 1910, Mr. Griffiths offered terms on behalf of the Naval Company, of which the following is a copy :—

> " Upper Five Feet Seam, Ely Colliery, Penygraig.
>
> " Schedule of terms offered by Mr. T. Griffiths on behalf of owners to Mr. Enoch Morrell on behalf of the workmen at the Conciliation proceedings at Llwynypia Offices, June 8th, 1910:—
>
> Cutting price per ton of large coal, 1/9 per ton.
>
> Stone irrespective of thickness, 1d. per ton.
>
> Clod to be paid for at the same rate as scheduled on the Five Feet Seam price-list at the same colliery.
>
> Dead work list as paid in 5 ft. seam with the following exceptions :—That ripping top be paid for at the rate of 1½d. per inch per ton for all thicknesses instead of 18 in. nil, and above 18 in. 3d. per inch, as provided for in the 5 ft. seam price-list."

Of these items the only one to which Mr. Morrell committed his acceptance on behalf of the workmen was that relating to dead work ; to the others he declined to agree, and on June 10th, 1910, the referees reported a failure to agree. The chief bone of contention was the cutting price per ton to be paid the colliers, and between the rate of 1/9 offered by the Company and that of 2/6 per ton demanded by the workmen on the alleged ground that this was the rate paid on the same seam at the Ferndale Collieries there was a substantial difference.

The main principle on which a price-list is fixed is the potential output capacity of a good workman on the seam to which it is proposed to apply the price-list. In ascertaining what the workman can produce at least four important considerations are kept in mind, viz.,: (1) The thickness of the seam (when the seam

is of medium thickness, say from four to six feet, it is as a rule considered most favourable for production); (2) the existence or the absence of slips (when these slips occur at medium distances of from 10 to 20 inches, the coal as a rule works freely; when they are exceedingly thick, they are hard to work, and when they are exceedingly thin, they yield an excess of small coal); (3) the presence or absence of bands of dirt; and (4) the nature of the roof, i.e., the amount of labour necessary to keep the roof safe. The management and the workmen apply their knowledge, judgment and experience to these matters and assign to them their monetary value. In addition to the price per ton to be paid the collier for cutting large coal,* the price-list includes additional rates at which the collier shall be paid for the timbers he sets in the stall roads (i.e., his working place near the face of the coal), for the cogs which he fixes in order to give the roof a stronger support than is possible under a vertical prop, and thus to provide increased protection against a squeeze from above; for the ripping of the roof or the cutting of the bottom of a working place in order to increase its head-room, and for the driving of headings. The heading may be described as the main street, and the stalls the side streets, of a mine. There are many other descriptions of work in addition to these for which separate prices are paid by the ton, the prop, the yard, the foot, or the seam as the case may be, and which go to make up the colliers' earnings at the end of a week or fortnight, but those specifically mentioned are the main items.† Thus the system under which the collier is paid his wages is a minute and complicated contract system, and the wages which the collier earns under these different heads is commonly described as his base wage. The rates paid for these different descriptions of work in 1879 are known as the base or standard rates.

How Price-Lists are Fixed.

* The Wages Agreement defines "the mineral to be gotten" as "clean large coal only," and provides (1) "that the cutting prices to be paid to he collier shall be the several standard prices prevailing and paid at the collieries of the owners respectively," and (2) "that such standard cutting price shall be paid upon the weight of the large coal . . . . and includes all services in respect of the small coal necessarily produced in filling the large coal, in conveying it from the working places to the screens at the surface, and in the process of screening, that price being equal to the value of all the services involved in getting such large and small coal, and being more than the value of the services rendered in respect of the large coal only" (Clause 7).

† When the price-list is in active operation, its value, both to the workman and to the Company, is governed largely by the efficiency of the arrangements for the carrying of the coal from the working place to the surface. The quicker the coal can be carried from the working place, and the more efficient the clearance service, the better it is for workman and employer.

(In the cases of a few collieries the rates in vogue in 1877, which were 15 per cent. higher than those of 1879, are taken as the standard or base rates.) In the fixing of new price-lists, those of 1879 or 1877, as the case may be, are taken as a guide for similar seams. The Wage Agreement provides definitely that "the cutting prices to be paid the collier shall be the several standard prices prevailing at the collieries of the owners respectively." So far as possible that rule is observed; it is not, however, observed invariably, and in those cases where new price-lists differ in their standard rates from those of 1879 or 1877, the difference is stated to be almost without exception in favour of the collier. But the wages earned by the collier on his price-list do not constitute anything like the whole of his earnings. The prices of few commodities have a wider range of fluctuation than those of Welsh coal. For example:—In 1896 the average selling price f.o.b. of large coal was 9/1.70 per ton; in 1901 it was 16/-; in 1905 it fell to 11/8.80 per ton; and in 1908 it reached 15/8.53 per ton. It has also to be remembered that labour is by far the heaviest charge on the production of coal (in the South Wales coalfield it averages about 70 per cent. of the total cost of production at the pit's mouth); that from 60 to 75 per cent. of the output of the coalfield is sold under annual or half-yearly contracts—in some cases a colliery will contract to supply over 90 per cent. of its estimated output; and that up to 1910 few bodies were better organised than the South Wales miners, or more determined in their claim for an elastic relation between wages and prices. The first method by which an immediate relationship was established between wages and prices was a sliding scale. Dissatisfied with the results of that method, the workmen in 1903 brought it to an end and succeeded in obtaining the assent of the coalowners to its substitution by the Conciliation Board system, which, though terminating the old automatic rise or fall in wages, preserved the principle of a quarterly adjustment of wages to prices, but gave the parties the power to introduce other factors than that of the average selling price into the consideration of an application for a rise or a fall in wages. The Conciliation Board Agreement now in force in the South Wales coalfield was entered into in April, 1910. Its provisions prevent wages from going beyond 60 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879; but it secures the collier, as well as every other class of labour in a mine, a minimum addition to his standard earnings of 35 per cent. As a matter of fact the South Wales miner during the past ten years has been receiving on an average an extra wage of 49.60 per cent. on base rates—in other words, about 9/11 extra upon every £1 he has made on his standard price-list (in the case of the collier) or in his standard day wage (in the case of most of the other classes of workmen employed at a colliery).

The Crux of the Naval Trouble.

The difficulty in the fixing of a price-list arises from the fact that the assessment placed upon the labour value of a seam by the management often differs from that placed upon it by the collier, and herein lay the crux of the trouble in regard to the Upper Five Feet Seam at the Ely Pit. Prior to the strike the seam in question had been worked tentatively by a small number of colliers (between 70 and 80) on what were known as "consideration rates" of 5/- plus percentages, or about 6/9 per day. This day wage had no definite relation to the amount of work done by the men to whom it was paid. It was a fixed day wage, subject only to the fluctuations due to alterations in the general wage rate. At the Naval Colliery the standard wage rates were those of 1877; in 1910 the actual wages paid to the workmen at that colliery were 35 per cent. above the standard rates of 1877. It was this 35 per cent. extra standard wage which secured the men employed on the disputed seam their day rates of 6/9 per day; but it deserves to be pointed out that the general wage rate at this colliery could rise to a maximum of 45 per cent. above the standard rates of 1877, and a 45 per cent. general wage rate would have meant to those engaged under "consideration rates" a maximum day wage of 7/3. In the South Wales coalfield, however, it is the rare exception rather than the rule to pay colliers fixed day wages. The general custom is to pay them at tonnage or piece-rates; and perhaps in no industry is this method of payment more economically sound,or more practically desirable, than in that of coal-mining. It encourages the honest and industrious workman, and acts as an automatic check on the idler; while general experience in South Wales shows that the employment of colliers on fixed day rates is as demoralising in its influence on the workman as it is unproductive to the employer.*

"Ca'Canny" Methods and Arbitration.

The great complaint brought against the operation of the day-wage system at the Ely pit was that it did not yield the output it ought to have done. In the pamphlet already referred to, Mr. D. A. Thomas wrote:—"As is almost invariably the case when a new seam is being opened out in South Wales, the men were working 'ca' canny' in order to try and prove that the seam was a difficult one to work—in which they could only produce a small output of coal per turn—and thus influence the referees appointed to fix and arrange a list to adjudge them a better cutting price." The work-

*During the negociations for the Wages Agreement concluded in April, 1910, the late Mr. W. J. Heppell, who presided over the coalowners' side, said that scores of cases might be mentioned where outputs under fixed price-lists had been double what they were in the same seams under day rates.

men—though the output per miner employed on the seam was only 30 cwts. per day compared with an average of 48 cwts. per day throughout the Ely pit—strenuously denied the charge of ca'cannyism, and argued that if the outputs were small it was because of the physical conditions of the seam and of the large amount of unproductive labour due to those conditions ; but the two parties adhered to their respective positions, and the issue was carried a stage further by the decision of the Company to close down the pit. Acting under the instructions of his Board, Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, the general manager, informed the men that the pit could not be worked at a profit unless he got a reasonable cutting price fixed for the new seam, and on August 1st, 1910, after consent had been obtained from the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners' Association, notices were served by the Company on all the workmen employed at the Ely pit. On August 31st the general manager of the Naval Colliery suggested the reference of the cutting price to arbitration. But arbitration on such a matter of dispute was unauthorised by the provisions of the Conciliation Board Agreement and traditionally objectionable to the Coalowners' Association, and as the Company were members of that Association they were bound to subordinate their private view to its collective opinion and practice as an organisation. The workmen's representatives, to whom the suggestion was made, gave it their conditional acceptance, their reply being that " they offered no objection *provided a settlement could be arrived at upon fair and equitable lines satisfactory to the men employed on the seam.*"* Arbitration in the open sense suggested by the management was obviously impossible under conditions which had to guarantee beforehand that the award would be " satisfactory to the men employed on the seam." A demand for arbitration which made the acceptance of the award contingent on the men being satisfied that it was " fair and equitable " could not have received serious consideration from any body of associated employers ; but in this case the discussion of details was obviated by the objection of the coalowners to the application of the principle of arbitration to such a dispute, and late in the afternoon of August 31st, after the Association had been formally consulted, the workmen were informed that the owners could agree to no course which took the settlement of the dispute outside the provisions of the Conciliation Board Agreement. No further effort was made to settle the dispute along the lines of conciliation, and on September 1st the notices took effect and 900 workpeople were thrown out of employment.

* NOTE.—Mr. D. Watts Morgan at Tonypandy, on Nov. 2nd, 1910.

General Unrest.

Before proceeding to deal with the events which followed immediately in the wake of the closing of the Ely pit, it is desirable to draw attention to the fact that the coalfield generally at this period was in a state of serious unrest. A large number of collieries were either idle or under notice owing to non-unionist, price-list and other difficulties; an active campaign, led by those members of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation who had opposed the acceptance of the Wages Agreement and were openly hostile to the leaders who had recommended that Agreement, was in active progress for its repudiation, and, regardless of its provisions, in support of a demand for the payment of a guaranteed minimum wage to men employed in abnormal working places and the levelling up of the wages of the lower-paid day wage labourers; while one or two districts were threatening secession from the South Wales Miners' Federation as a protest against the apparent inaction of the Executive Council. The developments in connection with the dispute in the mid-Rhondda district not only accentuated but gave a focus point to the prevailing discontent. It was alleged that one of the officials of the Naval Colliery had promised employment to the Ely pit workmen at the other pits of the Company, that the Company not only had failed to redeem this alleged promise, but had prevented the Ely workmen obtaining employment at any other associated pit in the coalfield, and that this lock-out was adopted in order to force the Ely workmen into an acceptance of the terms offered by the Company.

Naval Lodge Committee's Appeal to the Coalfield.

The Naval Lodge appealed for support to "their fellow workmen of South Wales and Monmouthshire," and in a manifesto issued to the coalfield the Workmen's Committee set out their case in the following terms:—

1. "The cutting price of the Bute Seam at Ely is based upon the cutting price of the Upper Five Feet Seam at Cymmer, i.e., 1/9 per ton plus 1d. per ton on the hard stone near the bottom of the coal.
2. "This is both unfair and unjust, because of the immense difference which exists between the two seams.
3. "At the Ely there is a vast amount of unproductive labour, i.e., labour which can never yield one penny on the Price List offered, but *none of this is found in the Seam at Cymmer.*
4. "Take the working of this seam as it has been going on until the time of the stoppage last month. The system of payment has been the consideration rate, 5/- plus percentage on the 1877 Standard. The rate per ton put on the ticket for making this wage is 1/9. The average number of trams

filled in the best places was four between two men, and yet on four trams per day at the rate of 1/9 per ton they scarcely did make, and often did not make between them, the consideration rate of one. On that rate per ton, according to this price list, they are expected to make the livelihood of two.

5. "Another fact of importance is that, at the time notices were given to terminate contracts at the Ely, about 70 men were employed at the Bute Seam. These men would not accept this price list, and were served with notices to terminate contracts, and also nearly 900 others who were not connected with this dispute. The notices terminated at the end of last month, and everywhere that these men have endeavoured to get work they have been refused under one pretence or another. They are now locked-out, not only at the Ely, but from other collieries as well.

6. "A fact of a wider and more general import is that the seam upon which we have failed to agree over a price list is now ready for operation at each of the collieries of the Combine, viz.: Cambrian, Clydach Vale; Glamorgan, Llwynypia; Britannic, Gilfach Goch; and the Naval, Penygraig. These four form between them a mighty quadrangle, and from this seam alone millions of tons of coal will ultimately be worked. But the exceedingly pertinent and important fact is that nowhere at these collieries on this seam has a price list been settled; hence, it is a fact of infinite moment that the Ely Pit should at this moment be made the cock pit—the centre of this despotic attempt to force upon us a starvation price list. A price list once settled will undoubtedly be a price list for the whole of the Cambrian Combine.

7. "A fact which is of the widest and most general significance is the policy adopted by the masters in forcing upon us disputes *re* price lists, &c. That is, not only to stop the affected areas where the disputes exist, but the very much wider areas where no dispute of any serious nature obtains. To this fact the Ely Pit to-day owes its present lock-out, and also because of this despotic policy the workmen of the Cambrian Trust have decided to stand by their comrades. Because of this policy, this appeal is now made to the miners of the whole of South Wales and Monmouthshire."

This manifesto was accompanied by a diagram purporting to give a section of the seam in dispute. It was so inaccurate that a legal process instituted by the Naval Company led to its immediate with-

drawal. With the statements also made in the manifesto itself the Company disagreed absolutely. Mr. Llewellyn, the colliery manager, published a statement in which he entirely denied that there was a vast amount of unproductive labour in the seam and claimed that under the rates offered the men might earn up to 15/- a day. Attention was also drawn on behalf of the Company to the fact that if the seam at Ferndale on which a cutting rate of 2/6 per ton was paid was the same seam as that at the Ely Pit over which the dispute had arisen, then the seam at Bodringallt, in the Rhondda Fawr Valley, must be the same, for the Bodringallt seam had been worked through to the Ferndale seam. The cutting price of the seam at Bodringallt, however, was very considerably lower than that proposed by the Naval Company. The Naval Company seem to have had no objection to adopt the Ferndale rates as a whole. Writing later on this subject, Mr. D. A. Thomas stated: "I may say on behalf of the Naval Company that we shall be happy to adopt the rates throughout and for all classes of labour and seams that obtain at the Ferndale Collieries in exchange for our own rates at the Naval Collieries; but we cannot allow the workmen to pick and choose Ferndale rates, where they are higher, and leave us with our old Naval rates where they are higher." It is here desirable to point out, further, that the complaints of boycott and lock-out urged against the employers ignore altogether the fact that it was the refusal of the workmen to accept what the coalowners' referee considered a fair offer, and the impossibility of working the pit at a profit without a reasonable price-list, that were responsible for the closing down of the Ely pit. Virtually the attitude adopted by the workmen towards the disputed seam was no less a boycott than the closing of the pit a lock-out; it represented an organised attempt to secure an economic advantage by withholding labour except at their own price; and it seems hardly consistent on their part to have claimed the use of a weapon which they denied the employers.

Extension of the Naval Stoppage.

These were the conditions under which 1,200 colliers employed at the two other pits of the Naval Company, viz., the Pandy and Nantgwyn, struck work without any notice on September 5th, and the Cambrian, Glamorgan and Britannic Colliery workmen on September 19th. The Naval, Cambrian, Glamorgan, and the Britannic Merthyr collieries are adjoining properties embracing an area of 7,600 acres, employing over 11,500 workmen, and producing nearly 3 million tons per annum; but, though each colliery has nominally a separate identity, they all fall within the control of the Cambrian Colliery Combine, of which Mr. D. A. Thomas is managing director and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn general manager. This is one of the circumstances which made the dispute at the Ely pit one of common interest to the whole body of the Combine workmen.

Except at the Ely pit there was no dispute between the workmen and their employers, but the Combine workmen held the view that what was made to apply to the Naval Colliery might be extended also to all the other working places under the control of the Combine, and it was for this reason that the whole force of labour in the district was brought to the support of the handful of men employed on the disputed seam. The extension of the stoppage to the Cambrian and the Glamorgan collieries was a defiance of a decision of a general delegate miners' conference held at Cardiff on September 17th. At that conference, where the recommendations of the Executive Council were defeated,* a delegate motion was adopted calling for a ballot of the whole coalfield on the following questions: (1) That a month's notice be given on October 1st to terminate contracts in the whole coalfield; or (2) that a levy be called to assist the Cambrian Combine workmen. At a mass meeting of the Combine workmen held at Tonypandy on Sunday, September 18th, the conference was thrown over, and on the following Monday they all stopped work.

This desperate step nearly precipitated a lock-out of all the Combine workmen; but, neither recommended nor acquiesced in by the local or Executive leaders, it was largely a spontaneous act of impulse on the part of the rank and file. The speeches delivered by the delegates who had attended the conference on the previous Saturday criticised very severely some of the members of the Council and were provocative of expressions of hostility towards the proprietors of the Combine collieries; but not one of the speakers went so far as to advise an immediate "down tools" policy. Mr. D. Watts Morgan even went so far as to suggest that certain communications which had taken place that morning and were still in progress might possibly lead to a settlement of the Ely Pit dispute. Mr. Leonard Llewelyn had expressed his readiness to re-open negociations, and a deputation of Ely workmen was to meet him on the following day. When, therefore, a recommendation from the platform advising the continuance of work pending the result of the ballot was defeated by an overwhelming majority, and a motion in favour of an immediate stoppage of work without notice was carried amid the acclamations of the miners, none were apparently

*Extract from the official report:—"Mr. Brace (the Vice-Chairman) put the position of the Executive Committee that the men at the Cambrian, Glamorgan, Naval and Britannic Merthyr numbering 12,000, should give notice on October 1st to strike, and that a levy be raised from the other members of the Federation. An amendment to this was moved from the conference, and when a vote was taken there voted. For the amendment 121; for the Executive Committee's recommendation 108. A card vote was then taken and resulted as follows: For the Executive Committee's recommendation 1,171, against 1,486—majority against 315. This represented a majority against of about 15,000 members."

more surprised than the local leaders. They said they were unable to explain the decision, and were determined not to agree to it. They found that among those who had taken part in the demonstration and had voted on the resolutions were not only the men who were idle at the Naval pits, but also miners from other parts of the coalfield. In view of these facts they took immediate steps to test separately the views of the men employed at the Cambrian, Glamorgan, and Britannic Merthyr collieries. A crier was sent to Llwynypia, Tonypandy, Penygraig, Blaen-clydach, Cydach Vale and Gilfach Goch convening sectional meetings for a late hour that Sunday evening, and at each of the meetings of the Cambrian, Glamorgan and Britannic Merthyr workmen the decision of the afternoon's mass meeting was reversed, while at the meeting of the Naval men a resolution was adopted advising the other Combine workmen to return to work. These sectional decisions, however, came too late to prevent the stoppage of work that night and the following Monday morning. The only other course open to the men was to apply to the managements for permission to resume work on Monday night. This they did, and at a mass meeting held during the afternoon at the Athletic Grounds, Penygraig—the scene of the Sunday's demonstration—the decisions of the sectional meetings were confirmed. These events damaged the prospects of a settlement which had been opened by Mr. Llewelyn's offer to re-open negociations, and had brought the coalfield to the verge of a huge sectional, if not a general, stoppage. Under similar circumstances the shipbuilders in the north of England, only a few weeks previously, had declared a general lock-out, and in some quarters it was thought that the circumstances justified, also, such a course here. The men had broken their contracts, ignored the provisions of the Wages Agreement, and had thrown over their local leaders as well as the conference of their own Federation. Collective bargaining was a dead letter, and contracts possessed no sanctity, if such courses were tolerated by the owners. It was decided, however, to deal with these issues under other circumstances, and not to retaliate by a lock-out. The proprietors of the Combine collieries complied with the request of the workmen to resume work on the following day at all except the Naval pits; and even the pourparlers between Mr. Leonard Llewelyn and the Naval workmen's deputation were resumed with a view to the settlement of the dispute on the basis of the rates paid on a similar seam at the Britannic Merthyr Colliery.

A One Day's Strike.

It will have been noticed that the terms of the ballot did not allow men the opportunity of voting against both of the two alternative proposals submitted for ballot. The support to be given the Combine workmen had to take the form either of a

Ballot on a sectional or a general stoppage.

large sectional or a general stoppage, and those workmen who disapproved of both policies, as many of the workmen did, were practically disfranchised by the form of the ballot paper. A number of the miners protested against their hands being tied in this fashion, and would have opposed a general strike on grounds of prudence, and a local strike on the ground that it involved the repudiation of a constitutional settlement. Letters were also written to the Press by leading coalowners pointing out the unfairness of the application of such ballot conditions to collieries where the workmen were in perfect amity with their employers, and where local opinion was overwhelmingly in favour of the adoption of a more conciliatory method of treatment. During the week prior to the ballot, however, grave apprehensions were entertained that it might result in a majority for a general stoppage. The rules of the South Wales Miners' Federation do not make a two-thirds majority necessary to the declaration of a general strike as is provided by the rules of some of the other miners' organisations in the country; a majority vote is sufficient; and in the case of this ballot the feeling in favour of strike extending over the whole of the coalfield was strong. In the Cambrian Combine district the workmen's central committee, on the eve of the voting, issued a manifesto in which they stated :—

> "The reason why the committee took this step (of advising a general stoppage) is that this grievance, viz., the tyranny of the owners in locking-out a large section of the workmen to compel them to accept unjust conditions, is not confined to the Combine alone, but is the general policy of the Coalowners' Association; therefore, it is a cause for the whole of South Wales, and fighting the Combine would not remedy matters. There are other collieries at present in the same position, and we feel as a committee that under these circumstances it is useless to make us the cock-pit of South Wales to fight this question."

In the Aberdare and Maesteg districts, too, the general strike policy was advocated, but the fact that the older leaders were opposed to such a policy, and that the form of the ballot had offended a large number of workmen, told heavily against it. The result was that only 81 per cent. of the members of the Federation, and about 53 per cent. of the workmen employed in the coalfield, voted in the ballot, but of those who went to the poll a majority of 32,110 declared in favour of the stoppage of the Cambrian Combine collieries, the figures being as follows :—

For the stoppage of the Cambrian Combine collieries, and a levy in support of the workmen employed there	76,978
For a general stoppage...	44,868
Majority against general stoppage	32,110

Negociations resumed.

While these events were in progress the more moderate of the miners' leaders were privately engaged in an attempt to re-open negociations with the Naval Company, and at a meeting of the Conciliation Board, held on September 23rd at Cardiff, the question of the disputed price-list was referred to Mr. F. L. Davis and Mr. W. Abraham, M.P., the chairmen respectively of the owners' and the workmen's representatives on the Board, who were to act with Mr. Leonard Llewelyn and Mr. D. Watts Morgan, the miners' agent for the district, in an attempt to bring about a settlement. It was at the request of the workmen's representatives themselves that these conciliators were appointed. At the same meeting the workmen's representatives suggested that the men employed at all the Naval collieries should be allowed to return to work. The coalowners did not see their way to accept that suggestion ; they complained of the illegal action of the Pandy and Nantgwyn workmen in stopping work without notice ; and stated that none of the Naval workmen would be allowed to return to work until the Ely Pit dispute had been settled. Mr. F. L. Davis, the spokesman of the owners on that occasion, also referred to the ballot, and in a strong speech of protest said that the owners looked upon such a course as a distinct breach of the Agreement. The workmen's representatives replied that they intended to abide loyally by the Agreement ; that they did not consider their action in agreeing to a ballot was any more a breach of the Agreement than that of the Naval Company in having locked out men who were not parties to the dispute ; and that they were compelled to take some action in the matter. It is of more than chronological interest to recall the fact that this declaration of the workmen's representatives that " they had to take some action in the matter " was made six days later than the date of the delegate conference held at Cardiff on September 17th at which the recommendation of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation to call out the Cambrian workmen and impose a levy in their support was defeated by 121 against 108 votes, and at which the Council was compelled to leave it to a ballot vote of the whole coalfield to decide whether action against the Cambrian Combine should be taken in the form of a local or a general stoppage. Though defeated on an important point of policy, the members of the Council did not consider it inconsistent with their *amour propre* to retain their seats and accept the dictation of a hostile conference. In this sense was understood their reply to the coalowners that they " had to take some action in the matter " ; it was a course which lowered the prestige of the Council, and diminished greatly the moral power of the Executive of the Federation. Considered, however, as a matter of tactics, it was a course justified by the event, for the result of the ballot was an endorsement, not of the extreme policy of

a general stoppage advocated by the conference, but of the sectional strike originally proposed by the Council.

Critical general situation.

The next step was the men's service of notices on October 1st at the pits under the control of the Cambrian Combine. The general situation in the coalfield when the 12,000 workmen in the employ of the Cambrian Combine handed in their notices was one full of peril to the peace of the South Wales coal trade. Throughout the summer months those leaders who had been advocating a strike in March and who were dissatisfied with the terms of the new Agreement had been inflaming the minds of the general body of the workmen against the settlement, preaching revolt against the authority of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, and inculcating doctrines of extreme Socialism. The hot-beds of discontent were the mid-Rhondda, Aberdare, and Maesteg districts. At Maesteg the workmen suspended their contributions to the Federation until that body agreed to extend financial relief to the miners who had been thrown out of employment by the closing down of the Garth and Oakwood collieries of Elders Navigation in consequence of its unproductiveness; in the Aberdare district a serious split had taken place in the ranks of the federationists; in many parts of the coalfield non-unionism had become widespread; and thousands of workmen were involved in local stoppages. The antagonism of class interests was bitter, the disloyalty of the workmen to their union was general and outspoken, and the differences between the leaders were as acute in a personal as they were in a tactical sense. In September over 20,000 workmen were involved in actual stoppages. These included nearly 14,000 in the Rhondda Valley, over 4,000 in the Rhymney Valley, and 2,700 in Monmouthshire. Over 15,000 of these men returned to work during the month after having been idle from 1 to 6 days; but in the early part of October the situation became even worse, for it saw over 23,000 colliers idle and over 15,000 others under notice. The following is a list of the principal pits which, largely on account of non-unionism, were idle:—D. Davis and Sons Ferndale pits, 6,000 men; Ocean Company's Rhondda pits, 4,500 men; Rose Heyworth pits, Abertillery, 3,000; Garth and Oakwood, Maesteg, 1,700; Ocean Company's Garw colliery, 1,000; Nantgwyn, Ely, and Pandy pits of the Naval Company, 2,000; Cory Bros. Gelli pit, Rhondda, 700; Tydraw pit, Treherbert, 500; the Mardy and the Cilely pits of the Locket's Merthyr Company, 2,750; whilst the collieries under notices were the Cambrian, Glamorgan, and the Britannic Merthyr pits of the Cambrian Combine, employing 9,650 workmen; the Lower Deep and Henwain pits, Blaina, 3,000 men; the Coegnant Colliery, Maesteg, 1,900 men; and the Penrhiweeibr collieries, 1,700 men. The

individual duration of these stoppages in October ranged from a day to 31 days; the majority of them were settled during the first fortnight of October. On October 20th began that strike in the Aberdare Valley which, breaking out without a day's notice and even without the knowledge of the agent of the district, at the Lower Duffryn Colliery of the Powell Duffryn Company (owing to the posting up of a notice by the Company prohibiting the taking away of pit timber for firewood purposes except with the consent of the Company and at a very nominal charge) extended rapidly to all the Aberdare Valley collieries of the Powell Duffryn Company, and ultimately under openly intimidatory influences involved all pits and levels in the Aberdare Federation district. In many quarters it was thought that the only possible outcome of these numerous sectional stoppages would be a general strike. They were harassing trade in every direction; they were embittering the relationships between the employers and their workmen; and diverting large orders to other markets. All through the trouble, however, the colliery owners had been pursuing a purely defensive policy. They stood for a rigid observance of the conditions imposed by the machinery of the Wages Agreement and of the practice of the Conciliation Board, but though sorely tempted they rigidly abstained from reprisals, and there would appear very little doubt that it was to the caution exercised by the members of the Coalowners' Association during this period of severe stress and trial both in their individual and collective capacities that a general strike was avoided. Their attitude, too, in this respect was in marked contrast with that adopted by the workmen, whose acts were persistently illegal and unconstitutional. In one case in the Maesteg district the Company gave its sanction to terms of settlement which in some respects ran counter to the policy of the Association; but even in that case the departure from the Association policy erred more on the side of magnanimity than of vindictiveness, and was more local than general in its bearings. Rather than permit themselves to be exasperated into the adoption of measures of offence, the owners gave every chance to methods of conciliation which fell within the scope of the Wages Agreement and acknowledged the binding power of the principle of collective bargaining, and the two new referees appointed on September 23rd continued at their work. They were assisted in their task by the Combine colliery managers on the one side, and by the miners' agent and the local workmen's committee on the other, and on October 22nd they agreed to terms of settlement.

Settlement of October 22nd, 1910.

It was virtually on the terms arranged on this date that work was resumed in September 1911, and in view of the controversy it created and the decisive stage which it marked in the open and avowed resistance

of the strikers to the views of the responsible leaders of the Federation it is important to state what happened at these proceedings. In addition to Mr. F. L. Davis and Mabon, there were present, Mr. D. A. Thomas, Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, and Mr. Trevor Price, representing the Naval Colliery Company, and Mr. D. Watts Morgan and a committee representing the Naval Colliery workmen. A deputation representing the other Combine collieries was also in attendance at the Engineers' Institute, Park Place, where the meeting was held, and was in constant consultation with the Naval men, but no official recognition was given to it by the representatives of the Naval Company and it was denied any active participation in the direct negociations between the representatives of the Naval Company and the Naval workmen. In the absence of a detailed official report of the proceedings the best thing to do is to give in parallel columns the versions afterwards written by Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mabon. They were in the following terms :—

MR. D. A. THOMAS' STATEMENT.

"What happened was this: Mr. Llewelyn offered the men the price list of the same seam in the Britannic Colliery, and Mr. Watts Morgan and the committee said they could not accept that because it was based on the 1897 standard, but would we base it upon the 1877 standard, because that was the standard which they alleged was in vogue at the Naval Colliery. After some consideration we agreed to accept their suggestion, and it was arranged that these terms should be submitted to the workmen at the Naval Colliery. Mr. Abraham and Mr. Watts Morgan agreeing to recommend the arrangements to the workmen, while the committee, lacking the moral courage to give a lead to their fellows, said they would neither recommend it nor advise its rejection. The terms arranged were worse

MABON'S STATEMENT.

Mr. D. Watts Morgan came into the room that I was in and reported that the employers' side had ultimately offered them the price paid at the Britannic Colliery for the seam at Ely, and that they, the workmen's representatives, through Mr D. Watts Morgan, had made a counter proposition, namely, that the management should translate the standard cutting price, which at the Britannic was the 1879 standard, to that of the 1877 standard, also that the Ely men should be paid the schedule of dead work rates paid already there for the five foot seam. True, the deputation protested while in the room with me that they would never accept the Britannic list. But let it be understood that the terms as they were proposed by the deputation, and finally accepted by the employers, are not by any means the Brit-

from the company's point of view than anything we had intended offering, and it was only at the instance of Mr. Fred Davis and out of regard for the public interest that we finally accepted them when they were suggested from the other side of the table."—(Vide S.W.D. News, October 29th, 1910).

annic list. The deputation and myself were called back to the joint conference-room, and there, after a deal of pressure from Mr. D. Watts Morgan, the management—who were contending that both the gain to the workmen from the proposed translation of the standard cutting price and the material concession that they held was contained in giving the dead work list of prices of the upper five feet at the Ely, instead of the dead work list of prices at the Britannic, were far more of a concession than they at the beginning of the day thought of conceding—accepted the workmen's proposal."'

Mabon's statement continues :—

" At this stage Mr. Davis and myself set one of the secretaries to place the terms agreed upon on paper. Here they are :—

" Naval Collieries ; Ely Pit.

" Conciliation proceedings at the Coalowners' Institute, Oct. 22nd, 1910, respecting the Upper Five Feet Seam Price List Dispute.

" Subject to the workmen's representatives agreeing to recommend the acceptance of the terms mentioned, the Company agree to pay 2s. 1.3d. per ton cutting rate on the Upper 5 ft. Seam, the payment to include the cutting, filling, and clearing of large clean-screened coal, and for all labour performed in dealing with clod and stone up to 12 complete inches in thickness, with a payment of one farthing per inch for every complete additional inch in thickness.

" All other items of labour to be paid in accordance with the schedule of rates agreed to between the management and the Workmen's Committee on October 12th, 1910.

" The above prices to be based on the 1877 standard.

(Initialled) " Fred. L. Davis.
" W. Abraham.

" The above terms are the exact result—the monetary value—

of the last proposal made by the workmen's side to the employers' side, and which the latter accepted from the former.

"Now one of the most serious facts of the case is the controversy between my colleague, Mr. D. Watts Morgan and the Ely deputation, namely, that the deputation assert that Mr. Morgan made the counter-proposition referred to on his own initiative and without their consent. Here I am powerless to decide between them, it having been done in another room. This I do know, that Mr. Morgan, since, has persistently avowed to me in public and in private, among friends and foes, and even in the presence of the general secretary of the parent Federation, Mr. T. Ashton, that he did submit the proposal to the deputation before making it to Mr. Leonard Llewelyn. Still, whether he did so or not, this is a most important fact, namely, that they, the workmen's representatives, made no demur to my signing the paper containing the terms after it had been read. It is true they themselves refused to promise to recommend the terms, but sat there *silently consenting to the whole affair, and finally agreeing to submit the terms, as written, impartially to the men, and to allow the latter to decide for themselves.*"—S.W.D. News, June 6th, 1911.

It will be gathered from a perusal of these two statements that in so far as one covers the ground indicated by the other the two are in almost literal agreement. The chief points of concurrence are :

(1). The terms accepted by the Naval Company were the terms proposed by the workmen's representatives.

(2). The acquiescence of the workmen's representatives in the formal acceptance of those terms on behalf of the workmen by Mabon.

(3). The undertaking of Mabon and Mr. D. Watts Morgan to recommend the acceptance of the terms to a mass meeting of the men.

(4). The pledge of strict neutrality given by the workmen's committee when the terms were laid before the men.

Mabon recommends acceptance of October Terms.

How this compact was observed will be seen in the record which follows of the events of the last fateful week of October. True to their undertaking, Mabon and Mr. D. Watts Morgan attended a mass meeting of the workmen, on Monday, October 24th. On their arrival at Tonypandy they were privately informed that the members of the deputation which had attended

the conciliation proceedings had that morning been advising the workmen in a sense diametrically opposed to the undertaking of neutrality they had given ; but this information did not deter the two leaders from carrying out the promise they had given and the agreement they had signed with the coalowners. The following passages are taken from their speeches at that critical meeting :—

Mr. D. Watts Morgan said :—

" The offer of the Company in the first instance was 1/9 per ton for cutting, filling and cleaning coal, with a penny per ton added for dealing with the stone in the seam up to four inches, and a farthing per inch for any additional thickness of stone, the clod to be paid for on the clod scale in vogue in the Five Feet Seam. . . . . All along the line it was pointed out by the management that the workmen had not made any proposal whatever with a view of arriving at a settlement other than the original proposal of 2/6 per ton for cutting and filling the coal. To this the men's representatives replied that the Company were equally responsible. Ultimately it was pointed out by the management that the seam at the Ely Colliery was identical with that worked at the Britannic Colliery, Gilfach, and through Mr. Llewelyn offered the adoption of the price list at the Britannic Colliery for the seam at the Ely Pit. There was, however, some objection to this, as the Britannic price list was based on the 1879 standard instead of that of 1877. There were other objectionable features, but the management, after a great deal of pressure, consented to translate the terms, so to speak, in order to apply to the 1877 standard. As far as deadwork was concerned, the management had made a material concession, and it was only fair to say that this concession, which was that the schedule of rates in the Five Foot Seam should be adopted, would amount to a great deal. The great difficulty which had been experienced was in regard to the cutting price, &c., of the ton of coal. In this connection the final terms offered to the men were that the Company agreed to pay 2/1.3 per ton cutting rate on the Upper Five Feet Seam, this payment to include the cutting, filling, and cleaning of large screened coal, and for all labour performed in dealing with clod and stone up to 12 inches in thickness, with a payment of ¼d. per inch per ton for every complete additional inch in thickness. At the present time what was paid for in the Britannic Seam on the 1879 standard was 1/10 per ton to include clod and stone in the seam up to 12 inches in thickness, for every additional inch beyond that a

¼d. per inch per ton. The change in the standard was again a material concession, and meant, in round figures, 1.15d. per ton more than was obtained at the Gilfach (Britannic Merthyr Colliery) on the price list there. All the other items of labour were to be paid for in accordance with the schedule of rates in the Five Foot Seam."

Mr. W. Abraham, M.P., (Mabon), in recommending the acceptance of these terms said :—

"They had now arrived at a stage when the men should seriously consider any step before rejecting the proposals now offered. His mind was clear on the matter, and he felt it was his duty to give them his advice. He was there in his capacity as Chairman of the workmen's side of the Conciliation Board rather than as their agent. . . . . Considering everything, knowing a good deal as to what obtained at other collieries, knowing also something about the various proposals and of the conditions of working, he was personally of opinion that the men would be acting wisely, after mature consideration, in accepting the proposals now submitted to them as a settlement of this important matter. (Some dissent.) 'I have a duty to perform. You have to think the matter over. It would not be honest for me to come here and not to give my opinion. My friends did not ask me to come here and be dumb on the matter. (Cheers). This is by no means the first time that I have had to give my opinion upon points, and I want you to consider the matter, and I sincerely consider the vastly improved conditions that are now put before you as compared with anything that has been offered to you before.'"

Mabon having made a further appeal to the men to seriously consider what they were doing before they decided to reject the new terms, Mr. D. Watts Morgan replied to a number of questions, and in doing so said that the terms now offered compared favourably with those which obtained at neighbouring collieries. The terms were the final and the best which the Company would offer the men, and for that reason he strongly advised the men to accept the terms.

Terms rejected by the Workmen.

The Naval workmen deferred their decision till the following Wednesday, Oct. 26th, when, under the excitement of speeches made by members of the Committee condemning the terms arranged on the ground mainly that they did not in the view of the committee guarantee a living wage, and alleging either incapacity

or indifference on the part of Mabon*, they rejected the advice of their Executive leaders and accredited representatives on the Conciliation Board, refused the settlement made on their behalf, and began the consideration of measures for the conduct of a strike. This was the second occasion within a few weeks on which the authority of the Federation leaders had been repudiated, and it marked the taking of a further step in that course of independent and rebellious action which was destined to bring so many evils in its train. On Friday, October 28th, two days after the rejection by the mid-Rhondda workmen of the terms of settlement arranged on their behalf, meetings were held at Cardiff of the Coalowners' Association and of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, and at both serious consideration was given to the grave situation in the coalfield. At the meeting of the coalowners, which was very largely attended, and at which there was expressed a firm determination to deal with what was described as an "intolerable situation." resolutions were adopted to extend full financial support by way of indemnity to the owners whose pits were already or about to become idle, and to prevent the employment of any of the strikers at any of the associated collieries; whilst at the meeting of the Executive Council of the Federation it was decided to appoint a deputation consisting of Mr. T. Richards, M.P., the General Secretary of the Federation, Mr. John Williams, M.P., Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, and Mr. John Davies, to wait on the workmen's Joint Committee and endeavour to persuade them to reconsider their decision rejecting the terms of settlement. This deputation met the committee at the Thistle Hotel, Llwynypia, on Saturday evening, October 29th; it pleaded with the Committee to give the settlement an experimental trial; and referred to a suggestion that the October 22nd terms might be allowed to go to a ballot of the workmen. Its appeals were made in vain. The committee reminded the deputation that the terms offered had been almost unanimously rejected at a mass meeting of the workmen, that the whole coalfield had already been ballotted on the question of a local or a general strike, that under that

* NOTE.—Mr. T. Smith (member of the Workmen's Committee): "Mabon had not considered the figures as they affected the men when worked out; otherwise he would not have advised the acceptance of the price list." (Speech delivered at Tonypandy, October 26, 1910). Mr. Ted Hughes said "the terms would mean starvation wages. . . . They were convinced that no man could make a living wage on less than 2/6 per ton."

In view of these declarations it may be useful to state that the actual earnings of the men employed under the proposed terms in the first fortnight after work had been resumed were as follows:—Two averaged 6/9 a day; 12, 7/- to 7/6; 15, 7/6 to 8/-; 12, 8/- to 8/6; 8, 8/6 to 9/-; 6, 9/6 to 10/-; and two 10/- to 10/6. As the mine was brought into a better state of repair still higher wages were earned.

ballot the coalfield was committed to a stoppage of all the pits controlled by the Cambrian Combine and to a general levy in support of the Cambrian Combine workmen, and that the men were determined to adhere to the decision of the coalfield. Eventually the Committee passed the following resolution :—

> "That the tyrannical action of the Cambrian Combine in locking out our fellow-workmen, and endeavouring through their sufferings to force upon them the acceptance of an unfair price-list, must be resisted at all costs, and that we further pledge ourselves to be faithful to the decision of the Federation ballot, and to refuse to work for the Cambrian Combine until a fair price-list has been settled for the Ely Pit workmen, or the 800 of our fellow workmen who are not affected are reinstated in their employment."

Situation on Nov. 1st, 1910.

With the passing of this resolution the die was cast, and on Tuesday, November 1st, the Cambrian Combine strike began. The general situation in the coalfield, which had been gradually growing worse, was at this date an extremely perilous one. In four important districts of the coalfield the workmen numbering over 28,000 were in open conflict with the employers over questions affecting wages or conditions of employment. Those storm centres were the Rhondda, Aberdare, Maesteg, and the Western Valleys, Monmouthshire. During the last week of October the dispute at the Aberdare Valley pits of the Powell Dyffryn Company had been proceeding peacefully ; the management were in communication with the representatives over a statement of alleged grievances the men had tabulated ; and on October 26th Mr. E. M. Hann, the general manager of the collieries, met a large deputation of the workmen, who were accompanied by their agent, Mr. C. B. Stanton, at his offices at Aberaman. One or two incidents at this conference deserve to be mentioned. When Mr. Hann pointed out to Mr. Stanton that the strike was a violation of the Wages Agreement Mr. Stanton replied that he was no longer a member of the Conciliation Board and therefore did not consider himself bound by the regulations of that body, and when informed by Mr. Hann that the Company had not yet decided whether or not to take action against the men for breach of contract, Mr. Stanton warned him that the men would refuse to pay any damages that might be imposed upon them as the result of such action and that a prosecution would only aggravate the perils of the situation and make it more difficult to settle. In spite of these defiant declarations Mr. Hann permitted the deputation to state its alleged grievances ; but the meeting terminated without any arrangement in order that Mr. Hann might

proceed to London to keep a previously arranged appointment. On the following day the situation in the Aberdare Valley underwent a change for the worse as dramatic as it was unexpected. Giving credence to an unfounded report that coal was being wound for commercial purposes from the Cwmneol Colliery Mr. Stanton sent the following telephone message to Mr. George Hann :—

> " I regret to learn they have been winding coal at one or two of the pits, which I may say is a violation of the Act, by not giving the checkweighers notice to be there. Further, I would like to say that if there is going to be blacklegging over this, there is going to be murder. My God, I mean it."

When this message was published on the following day, together with a statement by Mr. E. M. Hann that in consequence of it he had to decline to meet Mr. Stanton " on this or any other business," it provoked passion in the district to a fever heat. The workmen immediately retorted that they were determined to stand by their representative, and that they would decline to meet Mr. Hann except with Mr. Stanton. This contretemps completely destroyed all hopes of an early settlement of the dispute. The negotiations were broken off and the workmen set to work to extend the strike to every other colliery in the Aberdare Valley.

While these events were happening in the Aberdare Valley the miners employed at the collieries of North's Navigation Company, Ltd., in the Llynfi Valley, were in a state of revolt. There were several differences outstanding between them and their employers, particularly in regard to the wages of the traffic men, and the Conciliation Board were accused of unnecessary delay in its investigations into and in its settlement of disputes. The grievances of the men had been brought before the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation and that body had authorised the service of notices by the trafficmen at Coegnant and Maesteg Deep ; but encouraged by what had taken place in the mid-Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys the workmen employed at all the Company's collieries stopped work without notice, and at a mass meeting held at Maesteg, on Monday, October 31st, they passed the following resolution :—

> " That all the workmen employed at the North's Navigation collieries, including the enginemen, fanmen, stokers, timbermen, and ostlers, be called upon to cease work at once."

In the adoption of this resolution the workmen were supported by their agent, Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, who in the course of his speech stated " the time had come when they should join hands with their fellow-workmen in the Rhondda and elsewhere to fight for their

manhood," and that day work was stopped at the Caerau, Coegnant, Maesteg Deep and Cwmdu pits. The other collieries idle at this date owing to disputes with their employers were the Gelli Colliery, Ystrad, owned by Cory Bros; the Cilely Colliery, Tonyrefail, managed by the Locket's Merthyr Company; and the Cwmtillery and Rose Heyworth pits of the Lancaster Steam Coal Collieries, Ltd., Abertillery; and the Powell Dyffwyn Aberdare pits. The Abergwynfi Colliery, owned by the Great Western Railway Company had been closed down, and the Penrhiweeibr Colliery of the Penrikyber Company was idle on account of non-unionism. The number of workmen affected at each of the collieries by these stoppages were as follows:—

Glamorgan Colliery, Llwynypia	3,634
Cambrian Colliery, Clydach Vale	4,112
Naval Colliery, Penygraig	2,377
Britannic Merthyr, Gilfach	790
Aberdare "P.D." Collieries	5,500
Gelli Colliery, Ystrad	800
North's Navigation Collieries...	4,200
Rose Heyworth and Cwmtillery	2,664
Cilely Colliery, Tonyrefail	837
Penrhiweeibr Colliery	1,787
Abergwynfi Colliery	908
Total ...	27,609

In addition to this number of miners actually involved in the strikes there were more than 5,000 others under notices on account of non-unionist difficulties. No opportunity seemed more favourable to the purposes of those leaders of the workmen who wished to bring about a strike of the whole coalfield on the abnormal places and lower paid day wagemen questions; but what use was made of that opportunity will be shown at a later stage.

Federation's disregard of its obligations.

Meanwhile, in order that the character of the movement which led to the sectional stoppages may be better understood it will be useful at this point in our narrative to draw attention to the relation of the acts of those who were determined to try conclusions with the Cambrian Combine and other employers to the specified obligations of the workmen as members of one of the strongest labour organisations in the country and as parties to the Conciliation Board Agreement of the South Wales coalfield. The time has not yet arrived when organised labour in this country is prepared to give up its power of striking. The strike is its most formidable weapon, and the more organised

labour becomes in individual industries and the greater the cohesion that can be secured by distinct organisations on questions of common interest the stronger will become not only the bargaining power of organised labour, but also its grip on the commercial and industrial life of the nation. Yet there is no greater industrial evil than the strike. In the South Wales coalfield its history during the past 25 years in so far as it relates to the immediate purposes for which a strike was undertaken, has not been a very fortunate one. It is true that the miners have secured advantages which they might not have obtained without a strike, but these were not proportionate to the losses incurred, while ten years of a conciliation regime has yielded them in wages and conditions of employment greater benefits than any fifty years prior to the establishment of that regime. There are conditions, however, without which a Conciliation Board system is unworkable ; and of these conditions the most important are the recognition by workmen and employers of the sanctity of contracts, the fidelity on the part of both to the principle of collective bargaining, and trust on the part of workmen in those whom they may appoint to act on their behalf. The facts which have already been narrated will show to what degree these principles were upheld or overthrown by the Cambrian Combine, Aberdare Valley, and Maesteg strikers ; but there are other aspects which can only be seen in their proper light when they are looked at through the rules of the trade union to which the men belonged and the provisions of the Conciliation Board Agreement. For instance, one of the rules of the Federation states :—

> " No lodge, or part thereof, shall give notice of a strike before first securing the permission of the monthly meeting. Any number of men coming out on strike without complying with this condition shall forfeit all claims or protection from this Federation." (Rule 44).

No such notices were given in the cases of the Pandy and Nantgwyn, the Aberdare Valley, or the Llynfi Valley stoppages. In each of these cases the men were guided entirely by the impulse of the moment.

The contracts under which miners are employed in the South Wales coalfield are monthly contracts. In the cases just given these contracts were broken.

The Conciliation Board Agreement provides that no stoppage shall take place till the workmen and their employers and a committee appointed by the Board shall have failed to settle the matter in dispute. This provision was disregarded in each of the three cases.

Another clause in the Conciliation Board Agreement provides that " both parties hereby respectively undertake to make every

possible effort to secure the loyal observance by the owners and workmen respectively of any award made by representatives of the Board on any questions which may have been referred to them by the Board." In the case of the trouble at the Ely Pit of the Naval Company such an award was made by authorised representatives of the owners and the workmen, and by the Company and the Coalowners' Association it was accepted. That acceptance was in conformity with general practice; though it has condemned the details of many settlements made by its members the Association as such has never repudiated any. However bad the bargain may have been it has stood by the acts of its authorised representatives. With the South Wales Miners' Federation, too, it has been the exception rather than the rule to disclaim the acts of its representatives. But in this case what do the facts already given show? That the Executive Council as such not only abstained from exercising any disciplinary influence upon the mid-Rhondda members of the Federation, but ultimately acquiesced in the violent course taken by the Cambrian Combine workmen in throwing over the settlement of October 22nd, though to that settlement, according to Mabon's own version of what took place at the Engineers' Institute that day, the members of the workmen's committee had been themselves parties, and although the terms which formed the basis of that settlement had been proposed either by the members of that committee or by Mr. D. Watts Morgan or by the agent and the workmen's committee in conjunction. The action of Mabon and Mr. D. Watts Morgan in recommending the acceptance of the terms may not have been a formal Executive act carrying with it the administrative authority of the Federation. It was in that collective sense, however, that it was regarded by the coalowners who had throughout the negotiations treated with Mabon as the authorised agent of the workmen and in the belief, particularly as he was the President of the Federation and the chairman of the workmen's side on the Conciliation Board, that an agreement sanctioned and signed by him would settle the dispute. Had they understood anything different from this they would not have entered into the negociations. A reference to the speech of Mabon on October 24th will show that he himself admitted that the bargain to which he had assented had been made with him as the chairman of the workmen's representatives on the Conciliation Board. Still, the Executive Council as a body, in act if not in word, denied to the settlement or the Mabon and D. Watts Morgan recommendation the collective authority of the Federation. It met at Cardiff on October 28th, and the following are the terms of the official report of that day's meeting:—

> "A report was received from Mr. D. Watts Morgan on the negociations that had taken place respecting the price-list for the Ely pit. He said that the last meeting had been

attended by Mr. F. L. Davis and Mabon, the two chairmen of the Conciliation Board. Certain terms had been drawn up for submission to the workmen, who had since considered them and had decided unanimously that they were unsatisfactory. A long discussion ensued upon the situation created by this failure to agree, and upon the fact that the notices of the whole of the workmen of the Cambrian Combine terminated on Monday next. The Council resolved that Messrs. John Williams, M.P., Vernon Hartshorn, John Davies, and T. Richards, the general secretary, should attend a meeting of the Cambrian Combine Joint Committee on Saturday evening with a view to consider the whole situation."

The treatment accorded to this deputation has already been described. Early in 1910 the leaders in the North of England coalfield, when confronted with a similar situation arising from the refusal of a body of workmen to accept an agreement made on their behalf in connection with the Eight Hours Act, stood firm to the principle of collective bargaining, threatened the workmen that in the event of recalcitrancy they would be refused financial assistance, and in the end the leaders had had their way. The South Wales leaders lacked this courage. But their failure at this critical and decisive stage to assert their authority does not exhaust their delinquencies. In the official report quoted above they speak of a "situation created by this failure to agree." It may be argued that the words in the settlement of October 22nd providing for the reference of the terms to the workmen, and the rejection of those terms by the men justified the use of this phrase ; perhaps they do in a directly literal and theoretic sense, but as a general statement, applicable to the practice of the coalfield, and with its implication of responsibility against the coalowners, it is quite misleading. Between the conciliators who had been appointed by the Conciliation Board to settle the dispute and both of whom occupied seats on that Board exclusively as men "authorised to act on behalf of" the workmen and the owners respectively there had not only been no failure to agree, but there had been concluded an actually attested agreement. Moreover, the extent of the participation of the members of the workmen's committee in the settlement was suppressed ; it was disclosed privately by Mabon to a meeting of the Rhondda miners in the following December, but then prevented from being made public because of the fear that the revelation would injure the levies imposed for the support of the Cambrian strikers, and the facts of the case were not made publicly known till June, 1911. The Executive Council might have compelled a ballot of the coalfield in the last days of October on the ground that when the ballot of September was taken there was an open rupture between

the Naval workmen and the Naval Company and that since that ballot there had arisen the new great fact of the actual accomplishment of a constitutional provisional settlement of the dispute. There were other measures it might have adopted to maintain discipline and enforce respect for constitutional methods; but it neglected them all, and in positive act its interpretation of the pledge given in the Conciliation Board Agreement "to make every possible effort to secure the loyal observance of any award made by representatives of the Board" was limited to the appointment of the invertebrate deputation which waited on the Cambrian Combine Joint Committee at Tonypandy on October 29th.

Dissensions in the Executive Council.

It is well-known that some of the members of the Executive Council were favourable to the adoption of steps more consistent with their responsibilities; but they were bitterly opposed, and there is very little doubt that these internal dissensions were mainly responsible for its pitiable weakness as an administrative power in its dealings with this dispute. Mabon did not again visit the mid-Rhondda district. Mr. D. Watts Morgan, however, continued to identify himself actively with the men who had not only refused to accept his advice to accept the terms of October 22nd, but had rejected the method of fighting the Naval Company which had commended itself to his judgment. It will be recalled that on October 24th he had described the terms of October 22nd as "comparing favourably with anything which obtained at neighbouring collieries." Addressing the Cambrian Combine workmen on October 31st he said: "Now that the men have decided upon the course which they consider most acceptable to them not a word further will be said by me except that I will strain every nerve to maintain the men and their families as long as the strike lasts." On the same day as that on which this speech was reported there appeared an interview with Mr. Morgan in which, discussing the methods of fighting the issues involved, he said:—

> "I am sorry that the men and I disagree in reference to the method of fighting the action of the Company in locking out 800 men because of a dispute with only 80 men. My plan would be to concentrate our efforts upon that pit, prevent workmen of all grades from doing any work at that pit or at any new pit opened by the Combine, and pay the men affected at least 20/- a week while idle, and in that way keep them in tolerably comfortable circumstances, and thus prevent the Combine opening out this seam at any of their other collieries."

It is hardly necessary to draw attention to the unadulterated

character of the boycott doctrine taught in this passage, but it is perhaps well to emphasize the implied interference not only with the management of the colliery but also with the inherent right of the proprietors to decide what seams shall or what seams of coal shall not be developed in a colliery. The workmen would probably have realised the inconsistency of their attitude but for the fact that a long habit had inured them to the practice of boycotting as a weapon of offence. For very many years now they have never hesitated to stop a colliery or even a group of collieries for days and often for weeks in order to enforce certain demands affecting wages or conditions of employment, to compel Federation members to pay up their arrears, or to drive either into the Federation or out of the district workmen who are non-unionists.* Here are a couple of instances of boycotting stated by Mr. D. A. Thomas in his brochure on "The Industrial Struggle in the mid-Rhondda" to have occurred at the Glamorgan Colleries :—

> "On November 23rd, 1908, all the 4,000 workmen of the Glamorgan Collieries struck work because of a dispute confined, or mainly confined, to the workmen in the No. 2 pit, and remained out for three weeks.
>
> "In March, 1909, a dispute occurred affecting some 250 men, who abstained from working, and remained out for nearly two months. The workmen's committee immediately issued notices boycotting the colliery, stating that a dispute existed at the Glamorgan Collieries, and requesting men not to seek work there. These notices were posted upon the hoardings and placed in shop windows throughout the valley. This action on the part of the committee proved a serious inconvenience in the working of other portions of the colliery, and put the company to considerable expense."

The Cambrian Combine strike a Virtual Boycott.

Similar examples might be quoted from other collieries ; but they need not be multiplied, and those just given are enough to show the actual practices of the workmen. The main fact to be pointed out here is that with the expiration of the notices at the Cambrian Combine collieries on October 31st the whole force of the South Wales Miners' Federation was committed to the support of the miners who had come out on strike at those collieries. Between the employers

*NOTE.—In a recent non-unionist strike the workmen employed at a colliery were idle for over a fortnight, during which they lost £11,000 in wages and drew £2,000 in strike pay—in order to collect about £50 from Federation members in arrear, and to drive less than 20 non-unionists into membership.

and 94 per cent. of those miners there was no officially recognised dispute. The stoppage of work at all the pits under the control of the Cambrian Combine was the form of boycott adopted by the organised miners in order to bring about a settlement of the Ely dispute more to the satisfaction of the Naval workmen than the terms of October 22nd. The answer of the owners to this boycott was the denial of employment to the strikers at any of the other associated collieries.

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CHAPTER II.

CONDUCT OF THE STRIKES.

Lessons of 1893 and 1898 ignored.—Leading officials oppose projected General Strike.—Extraordinary attack on Mabon and other Leaders.—Collapse of General Strike Movement.—Advocacy of Extreme Strike Measures in mid-Rhondda, Aberdare Valley and Maesteg.—Policy of "Flooding the Mines."—Rioting begins.—A workmen's Train stormed.—Attacks on the Cambrian Combine Collieries.—Siege of Glamorgan Colliery.—Desperate Fighting.—Paralysis of the Civil Power.—Appeals for Military Assistance.—Troops despatched from Tidworth are held up at Swindon by the Government.—Home Secretary's explanation to the Chief Constable.—Metropolitan Constables ordered to South Wales.—Home Secretary's message to the Strikers.—Mr. Churchill promises to see that they "get fair treatment."—Message is resented by the Employers.—Glamorgan Colliery again Attacked.—Fierce conflicts between the Police and Rioters.—The Sack of Tonypandy.—Estimate of Losses.—Over 500 Rioters injured, one fatally.—Disturbances at Aberaman.—Attack on the Powell Duffryn Power House.—Repelled by a Baton Charge.—Movements of Troops.—Correspondence between the Home Secretary and the South Wales Coalowners Association.—Miners' Federation of Great Britain protest against employment of Military.—Criticism of Home Secretary's action.—How the Mine and the entombed Horses were saved.

Lessons of 1893 and 1898 Ignored.

The great South Wales coal strike of 1898, as well as the hauliers' strike of 1893, was precipitated by independent and unofficial action on the part of comparatively small bodies of workmen at a period of general unrest. On those two occasions, also, large bodies of the workmen were in open revolt against their leaders, and the leaders themselves were hopelessly dis-united. In the situation as it existed in the South Wales coalfield in November, 1910, the features of the earlier strikes of 1893 and 1898 were reproduced to such a degree as to produce a genuine and widespread fear that the coalfield was about to witness a repetition of the history of 1898, but on a considerably greater scale. We shall now see how things went. On November 1st 12,000 men were idle in mid-Rhondda, nearly 6,000 in the Aberdare Valley, and over 4,000 in the Maesteg district, as well as between 5,000 and 6,000 in other parts of the coalfield. The immediate aim of the extremists among these strikers was to coalesce their forces. They formed

plans with this end in view ; organised processions to those districts where the men were at work ; and attempted to create a new union. But they overlooked the fact that the discontent which brought about the stoppages of 1893 and 1898 had a deep-seated cause in the low rates of wages prevalent in those two years. In 1893 the wage rate for the year averaged only 15 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879 on an average selling price of large coal of 9/8.68 per ton ; in 1897 the average wage rate for the year was as low as 10.94 per cent. and the average selling price as low as 9/2.83, and in 1898 they stood at 15.55 per cent. and 10/1.31 per ton respectively. In 1910, however, prices averaged 14/9½ per ton and the general wage rate on December 1st was raised from 50 per cent. to 51¼ per cent. above the standard rates of 1879. Other conditions of labour, also, were in most cases more favourable, for whereas in the eighties working hours in the mines ranged from 9 to 12 hours a day, in 1910 they were only eight hours per day from the last man down to the first man up. There were it is true, alleged grievances in 1910. They have already been indicated ; but they were not common to the general body of the workmen. Abnormal places, the conditions of the lower paid day wagemen, price-list disputes, and Conciliation Board delays do not give labour movements the propelling power drawn from low wages and long working hours. But these elemental considerations the men overlooked, and they set about their task utterly regardless of the past industrial history of the coalfield. The first check to the general strike movement was a manifesto issued on November 2nd by the leading officials of the Federation (viz., Mabon, President ; Mr. T. Richards, General Secretary ; and Mr. Alfred Onions, Treasurer). In this manifesto an appeal was made to the members of the Federation not " to be parties to an attempt to redress grievances by this irregular method of bringing about a general stoppage of the collieries," and concluding with the warning that action taken "in such a sudden and unconstitutional manner must end disastrously to all concerned." On the following day Mr. C. B. Stanton replied to this manifesto in bitter terms and made an extraordinary attack on the leading officials of the Federation. " It is," he said, " the faint-hearted, over-cautious, creeping, crawling, cowardly set who pose as leaders, but who do not lead, who are responsible for the rotten condition of things as they are to-day. Things shall alter or we are determined that they shall grow worse."

Collapse of General Strike Movement.

This threat proved grimly prophetic in so far as it affected the course of events in the mid-Rhondda and Aberdare districts, but in the other parts of the coalfield the position began to improve. The Mardy Colliery workmen, though in the employ of the same Company, refused to stop in sympathy

with the Cilely miners who were out on strike in resistance to a demand of the Company that they should allow a dispute over a price-list to go for decision to the Conciliation Board in the regular way—a process to which the men were opposed because the Cilely Colliery was outside the Association when the dispute began; the men employed at the Pentre, Treherbert, Wyndham, and Neath pits of Cory Bros. abstained from sympathetic action with the men locked out at that Company's Gelli Colliery owing to a dispute over a price-list; the miners employed at the Rhymney Valley pits of the Powell Duffryn Company refused to comply with the request of the Aberdare strikers that they should cease work in sympathy; on November 3rd the Penrhiwceibr men returned to work; on November 4th terms were arranged at the Maesteg collieries of North's Navigation; and about the same time negociations were opened for the settlement of the dispute at the Cwmtillery and Rose Heyworth pits of the Lancaster Steam Coal Company, and brought to a satisfactory conclusion on November 18th. These independent settlements broke the back of the general strike idea, but instead of allaying they accentuated the gravity of the local position in the Aberdare and Rhondda Valleys. In those districts steps were taken to prosecute the strike with the utmost and unprecedented vigour. In each district the control of affairs was taken over completely by a joint committee representative of its lodges; both committees committed themselves to an attempt to stop the pumping and ventilating machinery. At a mass meeting of the Cambrian Combine strikers, held at Tonypandy, on November 3rd, the following resolutions, recommended by the Workmen's Committee, were adopted unanimously:—

> "(1) That steps should at once be taken to confer with the leaders of the organisations of the Enginemen, Stokers, and Surface Craftsmen's Union, and the Winding Enginemen's Union, with a view to getting their members to cease work at the end of this week.
>
> "(2) That in the meantime no man at present working at the Combine colleries do anything other than his own particular work.
>
> "(3) That in the event of these men joining hands with the miners, the latter pledge themselves to see that when a settlement of the dispute was arrived at, all these men would be reinstated in their former positions."

Resolutions to a similar effect had been carried at Maesteg and in the Aberdare Valley, while in the last-named district the Strike Committee went further, by unanimously pledging itself to a determination to close down every pit in the Aberdare Federation district.

Advocacy of Extreme Measures.

The decision to prevent pumping and ventilating was not altogether a new departure in the conduct of strikes in the South Wales coalfield. The workmen discussed the policy of adopting such an extreme course during the early stages of the strike of 1898; in that year, as in 1910, they thought that by imperilling the mines they would intimidate the owners into the concession of their demands; but in 1898 Mabon set his face determinedly against it, and one of his public declarations against such a course was in the following emphatic terms:—

> "For the sake of all that is fair do not commit such a blunder as to ask the enginemen and stokers to cease work. Whatever mistakes we might have made in the past this will be ten thousand times worse than anything else. Such a step will alienate from us every atom of public sympathy, and we will want it all. The idea is to drown up the working places. If you succeed, whose working places will be drowned? and where do the men propose afterwards to earn their wages? No! For the sake of humanity, for the sake of your wives and children, let us leave the matter where it is."

On June 30th, 1898, the following resolution was adopted at a conference of the enginemen and stokers:—

> "After full deliberation it was decided that we should be rendering the best service to the men by adhering to our present position, i.e., by continuing work."

That protest, as courageous as it was risky in view of the more or less general distrust with which the chief leaders were regarded in that strike, had the desired effect, and the threat to "bring the coalowners to their knees by flooding the mines" was abandoned. Unfortunately no such courageous action was taken either by Mabon or any of the other leaders in 1910. The members of the Executive Council with seats on the Conciliation Board lent their offices to the strikers when matters affecting the disputes came before the Board; but the real control of the strikes was left in the hands of the joint lodge committees of each of the two districts, and on not a single occasion was the voice of the Federation as such raised publicly against the extreme courses advocated and eventually practised by those committees. This silence grieved the best friends of labour in the district; discredited the Federation itself in the eyes of its more sober-minded members; and alienated public sympathy.

Flooding the Mines.

The first district to put the "flood the mines" policy into operation was Maesteg, where on Wednesday, November 2nd, the enginemen and stokers decided by ballot to join the colliers who, against

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the advice of the Executive Council, had come out on strike the previous day on the question of the lower-paid day wage men. This decision, though violating contract conditions of service and opposed by the officials of the Enginemen, Stokers, and Surface Craftsmen's Union, was given immediate effect to by the fanmen, pumpmen, haulage enginemen, and the stokers. The winding enginemen who were absent from the meeting held out against the action of their fellow workmen, and as the intervention of Mr. Boyd Harvey, the managing director of the Company, was followed quickly by a settlement, and the winding enginemen and colliery officials had remained at work no serious damage was done to the underground workings. Meanwhile, in the Aberdare and mid-Rhondda districts the joint committees were actively engaged straining every effort to stop not only colliers but every official, from the general managers down, from entering the pits,* and to extend the strike in the Aberdare Valley to the Cwmaman, Bwllfa, and Blaenant collieries, and the Duffryn Dare, Llwynhelig, Llwydcoed, Windber No. 1 and 2, and Dullas drifts. These efforts met with a great deal of opposition from the workmen themselves. Resistance on the one hand was offered by the officers of the Enginemen's Union and on the other by the Cwmaman, Bwllfa, and Blaenant miners. On the night of November 3rd, at an uproarious meeting held at Aberaman, a resolution was adopted pledging the workmen at these collieries to "down tools" at once, but it was opposed by considerable numbers of workmen at Cwmaman, Cwmdare, and Aberdare—men who, though paying their contributions, took little or no active interest either in the district or the central affairs of the Federation. On the following day, accordingly, the miners at these pits worked as usual; but from that moment they became the victims of an organised intimidation of the most violent character, and the general conduct of the strikes took the course of undisguised aggression and violence. The residences of a large number of officials who had continued to work at the "P.D." collieries were attacked and partly wrecked by mobs of strikers, bodies of workmen returning home from the Cwmaman and Bwllfa pits were hustled and threatened, and on the night of November 2nd a Great Western Railway workmen's train was stormed, and its passengers attacked, at Tonllwyd Crossing, Aberaman. On November 4th nearly every colliery in

Workmen's Train Stormed.

*NOTE.—"The Combine Workmen's Committee would strain every nerve to bring the fight to a successful issue, and it was their intention to stop any man from doing any work at the collieries. They intended to prevent any of the officials from Mr. Llewelyn downwards to enter the colliery yards." (Mr. William John, Chairman of the Cambrian Combine miners' mass meeting, at Tonypandy, November 2nd, 1910).

the Aberdare district, and most of the residences of colliery officials were beset by pickets ; similar proceedings were taking place in the mid-Rhondda district, and at a meeting of the South Wales Coal-owners' Association, held at Cardiff on November 4th, an urgent message was sent to Capt. Lindsay, the Chief Constable of Glamorgan, requesting increased police protection for their property. The Association also discussed the danger of the extension of the strike to all the surfacemen, and the managers of the collieries affected warned the workmen of the consequences of a violation of Section 5 of the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act of 1870. This section provides for a penalty of £20 or three months' imprisonment with hard labour where persons are convicted of the following offences :—

> "Where any person wilfully or maliciously breaks a contract of service or hiring knowingly, or having reasonable cause to believe that the probable consequence of his so doing, either alone or in combination with others, will be to endanger life or cause serious bodily injury, or to expose valuable property, whether real or personal, to destruction or serious injury."

By the end of the first week of November every pit and drift except the Abernant Colliery, owned by the Marquis of Bute, had been brought to a standstill, and in spite of the warning conveyed in the above notice most of the colliery officials and craftsmen in the mid-Rhondda as well as the Aberdare district had been either intimidated or persuaded into abstention from work. In the Aberdare Valley there were now over 11,000 miners idle, and in the Rhondda Valley over 12,000, while the other smaller stoppages, in spite of the settlements which had taken place, brought the total number of men out of work at this stage to more than 26,000. Some of the smaller pits were now completely at the mercy of gas and water. At the larger collieries the owners were still able to command the services of a small number of craftsmen, who worked night and day to keep the pumps going and prevent the pits from being flooded and the horses underground from being drowned.

There is now no secret made of the fact that the strikers in the mid-Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys had hoped to have brought out every workman and official of every grade by the end of a week or so. That was their deliberate intention when they determined to call out every craftsman and official as well as every collier, but when they realised that a week had passed without the achievement of that purpose and discovered that it was the intention of the Company to import outside surface labour for the Glamorgan Colliery at Llwynypia they determined on a series of day and night attacks. The available police force was hopelessly inadequate to deal with such

attacks. On Saturday, November 6th, Capt. Lindsay is estimated to have had under his command for the protection of the collieries in the two valleys just over 100 foot and mounted men apart from the local constables. This force was about equally distributed between the two valleys. On Saturday, November 6th, the Chief Constable had a consultation with the Stipendary and other local magistrates on the subject. Though provisional arrangements had previously been made by the county authorities for military assistance it was not at that moment considered necessary to apply to the Home Office for the despatch of the military. Extra police, however, were sent for from Swansea (30), Bristol (63), and Cardiff City (50). On Monday, November 7th, the Combine strikers determined on a merciless prosecution of their picketting plans. There were then in the Cambrian area 142 police, nearly all of whom were concentrated for the defence of the collieries. Before nightfall, however, the demonstrators had been able to bring about a complete suspension of ventilating and pumping work at all except one of the Cambrian Combine collieries. At the pits of the Britannic Merthyr and the Glamorgan Companies at Gilfach Goch the fires had been removed from the boilers and the machinery brought to a standstill ; a similar state of affairs had been brought to pass at the pits of the Naval and Cambrian Companies at Penygraig and Clydach Vale. At the Clydach Vale electric power station the electricians in charge of the machinery for some hours kept to their duties in the power house, but the angry menaces of the mob which, after overpowering the police and injuring two mounted men (P.C.'s Bowen and Jenkins), beseiged the building, and the dangers which they ran from the stones hurled at them through the windows made their situation too precarious and they attempted to escape. Some of them succeeded, but those less fortunate were seized by the mob, roughly handled, and in some cases frog-marched to their homes and left there with threats that worse might happen to them if they returned to work. At the Llwynypia Colliery of the Glamorgan Company, Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, the general manager of the Combine collieries, was able to retain the services of between fifty and sixty officials and craftsmen, and as the situation of these mines rendered them peculiarly liable to flooding and there were still underground over 300 horses the resources both of the Company and of the Chief Constable were concentrated on their defence. These defensive measures provoked counter-attacking methods on the part of the strikers. The miners who had been successful in their assaults on the other collieries moved from Clydach Vale, Penygraig, Trealaw, and Tonypandy to Llwynypia, posted themselves in large numbers around the Glamorgan Colliery, and from 10.30 p.m. till 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday) maintained a frenzied and desperate

Attacks on Combine Collieries.

attack on the property. The only position held in strength by the police were the colliery pay offices and an adjoining gateway, five yards wide, giving direct access from the main road to the colliery yard. The colliery as a whole was held by 99 foot and mounted men, under the command of Chief Constable Lindsay, of whom 30 formed a double police cordon drawn across the entrance to the yard, and 23 guarded the power station. But no position was more open to attack than the main open entrance. Immediately on the other side of the road it was commanded by a hill rising sharply, and intersected a few yards up the hillside by a roadway running diagonally from the main road to the main offices of the Company. On the hillside the hostile crowd was thickest, and from so exposed a position as the gateway and on so dark a night the police, who had to contend with stones which at some periods fell among them like hail as well as with the organised rushes of a mob armed with formidable improvised weapons, were temporarily overwhelmed and compelled to continue their defence from the shelter of the colliery buildings. The retreat, however, was not a defeat. Bleeding and lame from the injuries sustained in their many melees with strikers they kept courageously to their duties, and by a free use of their batons frustrated several attempts to capture the colliery. While these events were in progress another portion of the mob was engaged destroying the wooden palings which enclosed the property and divided it from the public highway, and a length of from 300 to 400 yards was brought to the ground. The aim of the strikers was to reach the power station, but as the level of the colliery property at this point is 15 to 20 feet lower than the level of the main road and the drop is sharp the progress of the assailants was slow. The situation of Mr. Leonard Llewelyn and his handful of faithful officials inside the power house as well as of the police inside the colliery yard was now an extremely precarious one. Absence of sleep and the strain of a whole day's anxiety had already brought several of the colliery officials to a state of exhaustion ; but they were determined not to surrender and they stood armed behind doors ready ro repel by force any attempt made to take the power house. The safety of the colliery and the lives of the 300 horses entombed in the workings depended on their efforts to keep the boiler fires alight and the ventilating and pumping machinery in motion and in those efforts they were prepared to risk their own safety. Had the rioters driven home in force the advantage they gained when they carried the cordon and compelled the retirement of the defensive police forces into shelter behind the colliery offices they might have succeeded in their extreme purpose ; but they were not certain of the strength of the police and did not proceed more than a few yards into the colliery, which, at this time, owing to the destruction by the mob of the street lamps, was in a state of cimmerian darkness. Meanwhile,

police reinforcements were on the way to the pit from Clydach Vale. At 11.15 these men arrived unobserved by way of the rear or eastern side of the colliery ; and at 11.30 began a series of baton charges which ultimately ended in the rout of the mob. At 12.30 the main road was reported clear and the Cardiff contingent marched to the Thistle Hotel, Tonypandy. At 1 a.m., however, a serious disturbance took place at the Pandy Square, Tonypandy, where the strikers driven from Llwynypia had assembled in considerable numbers, and were reported to be smashing windows and tearing down street hoardings. Supt. D. Morris called out the Cardiff City police, who, assisted by a squad of Glamorgan County constables under P.S. Morris, charged the mob, used their truncheons freely and dispersed the rioters after over an hour's hard fighting. Reporting on this outbreak Supt. Morris wrote :—" The strikers were well armed with sticks, stones and other weapons, and offered a stubborn resistance. After this all was quiet for the night."

Of the number of the rioters injured in the riots of November 7th there is no reliable record. It is known that over 60 of them were treated during the next twelve hours for broken skulls, damaged shoulders, and other injuries ; but a far greater number must have suffered, for the fighting, except for brief intervals, was practically continuous for three hours and over a hundred staffs were broken. Nearly every one of the constables engaged was struck with stones or some other missiles.

The total number of constables actually engaged in the conflicts with strikers during the night of November 7th was between 70 and 80, and of this number the official casualties totalled 38, or over 50 per cent. It is not without its irony that while some of the events described above were being enacted in mid-Rhondda the members of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation were squabbling at Cardiff over the course of action, if any, which should be adopted to deal with the situation created in the Aberdare Valley by the illegal strike of the Powell Dyffryn miners !

Paralysis of the Civil Power.

The situation had now gone completely beyond the control of the local civil forces. All the available police under the control of the Glamorgan County Council had been concentrated in the Aberdare and Rhondda Valleys, and as has already been seen the county force had been strengthened on Monday by assistance from Cardiff, Swansea and Bristol. To cope with the dangers which had arisen and which threatened a sort of civil war these forces were hopelessly inadequate. The Merthyr district magistrates had some days' previously reckoned on the possibility of such an emergency. On November 2nd, Mr. T. Elias, magistrates' clerk, had written to the War Office on the subject under the instructions of the local magistrates, and on November 5th had received a reply

communicating the King's Regulations respecting the calling in of military forces to assist the civil power to maintain peace. These precautions were taken in view primarily of developments in the Aberdare Valley; but though the actual scene of action had been shifted from the Aberdare to the Rhondda Valley the feared paralysis of the civil power had now taken place, and the Chief Constable of Glamorgan lost no time in applying for military assistance. At 1 a.m. on November 8th he telegraphed by pre-arrangement to Shrewsbury, Chester and Salisbury Plain for troops, and at 3.30 a.m., November 8th, received a reply from Tidworth, Salisbury Plain, that infantry and cavalry were on their way and would arrive at Pontypridd at about 9 a.m. that morning. At 10 a.m., November 8th, the Home Secretary received the following telegram from the Chief Constable:—

> "All the Cambrian collieries menaced last night. The Llwynypia Colliery savagely attacked by large crowd of strikers. Many casualties on both sides. Am expecting two companies of infantry and 200 cavalry to-day. Very little accommodation for police or soldiers. Position grave. Will wire again.—Lindsay, Chief Constable of Glamorgan."

The two valleys were now seething with hostility against Capital and against the workmen who were remaining loyal to their employers. So impressed was the Chief Constable with the dangers that, shortly after the despatch of the above telegram, he got into telephonic communication with the Home Office, and in conversation with Mr. Winston Churchill represented to the Home Secretary his fear that owing to the hilly character of the district at and about the Glamorgan Colliery he would not be able with police alone to prevent another night attack on the pit. Small bodies of police were arriving from Bristol, Swansea and Bridgend. Disappointment however was expressed at the delay in the arrival of the military. A rumour reached the district that the troops had been held up; and early in the afternoon it was officially confirmed by a telegram from the Home Secretary. Mr. Churchill had not authorised the despatch of the troops. He received information of their departure after they had left; stopped them at Swindon; and at 1.30, having ascertained the action taken by the military authorities and conferred with Mr. Haldane, the Adjutant General (General Ewart), Sir Edward Troup, and Sir Edward Henry, the Home Secretary sent the following telegram to the Chief Constable:—

> "Your request for military. Infantry should not be used till all other means have failed. Following arrangements have therefore been made. Seventy (actually sent 100) mounted constables and two hundred foot constables of Metropolitan police will come to Pontypridd by special trian, leaving

Paddington 4.55 p.m., arriving about 8.0 p.m. They will carry out your directions under their own officers. The county will bear the cost. Expect these forces will be sufficient, but as further precautionary measure 200 cavalry will be moved into the district to-night and remain there pending cessation of trouble. Infantry meanwhile will be at Swindon. General Macready will command the military and will act in conjunction with the civil authorities as circumstances may require The military, however, will not be available unless it is clear that the police reinforcements are unable to cope with the situation. Telegraph news Home Office and say whether these arrangements are sufficient.—Churchill."

At about 2 p.m., after the receipt of the above telegram, the Chief Constable, according to a note in a Blue Book on the strike disturbances issued by the Home Office on March 17th, 1911, communicated with the Secretary of State by telephone and reported that the contingent of 300 Metropolitan police would be sufficient to deal with the situation, and that, as the difficulties of accommodation, especially for mounted men, were very great, it would not be necessary, so far as could then be seen, to move the cavalry into the district that night. On this the Secretary of State decided that the cavalry should detrain at Cardiff, where the leading squadron was expected to arrive at about 6 o'clock. The cavalry did not reach Cardiff till a later hour that evening, and instead of proceeding direct to the disaffected districts, where rioting at the time was rampant, they were ordered to the Cardiff barracks and there to await further instructions.

Home Secretary's message to the Strikers.

While these military operations were in progress events were moving rapidly both in the mid-Rhondda and the Aberdare districts. At noon the workmen were paid off by the Combine Companies, and immediately afterwards assembled in thousands at the Athletic Ground, Penygraig, where they were addressed by their leaders. At this meeting the following message, received by the Chief Constable from the Home Secretary :—

"You may give the miners the following message from me. Their best friends here are greatly distressed at the trouble which has broken out, and will do their best to help them to get fair treatment. Askwith, Board of Trade, wishes to see Mr. Watts Morgan with six or eight local representatives at Board of Trade, two o'clock to-morrow (Wednesday). But rioting must cease at once, so that the enquiry shall not be prejudiced, and to prevent the credit of the Rhondda Valley being injured. Confiding in the good

sense of the Cambrian Combine workmen we are holding back the soldiers for the present, and sending police instead."

This message, with its faintly disguised innuendo against the employers, was resented by the general body of the coalowners and received indifferently by the strikers. Mr. Lleufer Thomas, the Stipendiary magistrate, and Mr. J. S. Davies, the magistrates' clerk, were also present at this meeting, and appealed to the strikers to avoid violence, stamp out disorder, and give all the assistance they could in the maintenance of the peace. The voices of the Government and the magistracy, however, were raised in vain against the courses to which the strikers had already committed them. Leaving the Athletic Grounds assured officially that no troops would arrive that evening, they formed a huge procession and marched through Tonypandy, Trealaw, and Llwynypia to the Glamorgan Colliery, in front and vicinity of which they drew up about 4 o'clock. The police estimate of the number of persons forming this procession was over 9,000. It was an orderly enough crowd during the march, but soon after its arrival at the Glamorgan Colliery it became very truculent, and at 5 o'clock, in a brush with a small body of mounted police, began a hand-to-hand conflict between the police and the mob which, lasting till 7.30, is believed to have been unparalleled in recent years in the grim fierceness with which it was fought and in the bloodshed which it entailed. In this battle the object of the mob was the capture of the power-house. Strikers were heard to say "that would be their last chance, as the soldiers would be arriving to-morrow." For their adventure they came armed with shafts, pick-axes, iron bars, pokers, barbed and plain wire ropes in lengths of three to four feet, and cudgels, as well as stones, and occupied commanding positions in a plantation and an open space on the rising ground opposite the colliery. The main body, however, was assembled in a dense mass in the road immediately outside the colliery pay offices and main entrance. The property itself was held by less than 120 constables (including 18 mounted men), who were under the direction of the Chief Constable, Capt. Lindsay. One of the first of the mob's overt acts was to bring to the ground what of the frail wooden fencing had been left standing in the previous night's riot; then followed the hustling of the body of police guarding the entrance, the throwing of stones at the constables under cover in the yard, and an attack on the power house. While these events were taking place in the front of the colliery the mounted constables who were patrolling the main road were cut off near the Llwynypia Post Office, and their situation was precarious till a detachment of foot police came up unexpectedly

The Second Attack on the Glamorgan Colliery and its Decisive Repulse.

behind a crowd of strikers, who were mercilessly stoning the mounted men, and drove them off in confusion. The mounted constables then returned under fire to the colliery, several horses as well as men being badly struck ; but the small force with batons drawn, swept the crowd in the direction of the main offices, and by a daring movement succeeded in clearing the road leading up to the main offices as well as the contiguous open space on the bank opposite the colliery yard entrance. Twelve constables were left in occupation of the ground from which they had driven the strikers. The mob, however, was in a fiercely determined mood, and soon afterwards was engaged in a simultaneous stone-throwing attack on the power house from the south and west sides and in an attempt to carry the main entrance. Two of the strikers asked for an interview inside the colliery yard with the Chief Constable, but the granting of that request would have been the discovery by the strikers of the strength of the defending force. For that reason it was refused, and the Chief Constable met the two men outside the gate. The interview was merely a parley to gain time and was quickly broken off. Capt. Lindsay, under these conditions, ordered the mounted men, who were stationed just outside the offices, to clear the main road with their truncheons in the direction of Tonypandy and a body of the foot constables to operate simultaneously in the direction of Llwynypia. The mob offered a stubborn resistance ; the police had to fight almost every inch of their way ; but after a prolonged effort succeeded in driving the rioters some distance away from the entrance of the colliery. No sooner, however, had the police returned to the colliery than the mob recovered most of the positions from which they had been driven, and charge after charge followed in quick succession. The casualties on both sides were now heavy ; the police, who had had little or no food or sleep since their arrival on Monday morning, were reaching a point of exhaustion ; no reinforcements of any strength were reaching them ; and at last they committed the fate of the fight to one last desperate effort to crush the spirit of the mob and make another rally by it unlikely. This was at about seven o'clock, when the cavalry asked for the previous night by the Chief Constable were detraining at Cardiff, and when the Metropolitans were still on their way to Pontypridd. With a dervish yell and batons drawn they dashed out between 80 and 90 strong from the colliery yard and cut a way clean through the densely packed mob. Their first purpose was to split up the crowd. This they achieved with very little difficulty, the intrepidity of the movement and the determination with which it was carried out having both surprised and for the moment staggered the rioters. This purpose accomplished, the police, by a pre-arrangement, quickly divided their party into two sections, one of which, composed of 40 Cardiff police under the

command of Inspector Lewis, set to work to drive the rioters in the direction of Llwynypia, and the other, composed of about 40 Bristol. Swansea, and Glamorgan constables under the charge of Supts, Thomas & Davies applied itself to the task of compelling the retreat of the mob towards Tonypandy. Moving forward in solid bodies of two files they slowly but steadily drove the rioters ahead of them. Constantly the two sides were in furious combat Using their formidable weapons with great effect the rioters on several occasions temporarily checked the forward movement of the police, and among others injured Chief Constable Lindsay: but they had to give way to the determined resistance of a small body of determined men each of whom felt that he carried his life in his hand, and scores of the rioters were struck down like logs with broken skulls and left on the ground. The agony cries of the injured, the sharp hissing clash of baton against pick handle and other weapons, the sickening thud of skull blows, and the howling of a mob maddened with rage is better imagined than described. Turbulent though its industrial history has been and many though have been its strike conflicts between police and people, South Wales, in the opinion of constables of long experience, has never furnished a parallel to the events of this night. More bones were broken and more blood was shed during this less than one hour's fighting than in any other half dozen conflicts during the whole course of the 1910-11 strike movement, and to all those who took part in it the memory of it is still a nightmare. The end of it was the complete rout of the mob; and the secured safety for the night of the power station at the Glamorgan Colliery. When the rioters had been driven in the Llwynypia direction as far as the Taff Vale railway bridge—a distance of about a quarter of a mile—and in the Tonypandy direction, also for about a similar distance from the colliery, the two sections of police doubled back to their starting point. Neither knew the fate of the other, or what, in their absence, may have happened to the colliery, which had been left in the charge of about 25 constables. In the course of their return, particularly along the portion of the main road between the colliery and Tonypandy, they found scores, if not hundreds, of rioters prone on the ground or staggering along the road groaning from the pains of injured shoulders, arms, and heads; while at the colliery itself they discovered that the handful of men left in charge of the property had all barricaded themselves inside the power station. Under the impression that the 80 constables who had undertaken the hazardous task of dispersing a mob which numbered anything over 7,000 had been defeated those who had been left behind made discretion the better part of valour by retreating inside the building, bolting and barring its doors, and making every preparation to defend it till they were either relieved or taken. Limping, bleeding from head, face, and hand wounds,

and with the fronts of their great coats saturated with blood, many of the constables presented a pitiable sight, and for hours later local doctors were engaged attending to their injuries. It is only necessary to add here that scores of batons were broken in this fight, that when they were gone the police used the pick handles and other weapons which they had captured from the rioters, that the local supplies of staffs had been completely exhausted, and that the following morning 300 were brought up to Llwynypia. If any further service had been required of the majority of the constables who had taken part in these engagements they could not have performed it, and at 7.45., Mr. Lleufer Thomas, the Stipendary magistrate, sent the following urgent telegram to the Home Secretary :—

> "Police cannot cope with rioters at Llwynypia, Rhondda Valley. Troops at Cardiff absolutely necessary. Will you order them forthwith. Am ready to accompany them.—Lleufer Thomas, Stipendary Magistrate, Pontypridd."

The reading of the Riot Act was considered almost inevitable, and the other magistrates in attendance were Mr. J. D. Williams, Mr. D. W. Davies, and Mr. Lewis. At 9.15 Mr. Lleufer Thomas was informed by the Home Secretary that powers had been given for the movement of the troops into the disturbed districts.

The Sack of Tonypandy.

The incidents at Llwynypia, however, do not complete the story of the grim night's work of November 8th. Immediately after the repulse of the attack on the Glamorgan Colliery came the sack of Tonypandy. At the time the smashing and pillage of more than 60 tradesmen's premises in Pandy Square and Dunraven Street was thought the more serious of the outbreaks of November 8th ; seen now in its proper perspective the Tonypandy riot was nothing like so fierce an affair as that which had immediately preceded it. Briefly the facts are as follows :—In their fight from Llwynypia and under the impression that the victorious police were still at their heels, the rioters, desperate at the defeat of their plans to take the colliery, gave vent to their rage by smashing the windows of every shop that came within their reach. Near Penygraig road they halted and realising that they were no longer being pursued by the police they returned to Pandy Square. Then the looting began. Shop after shop was raided and pillaged, and from the premises of Mr. John F. Phillips, outfitter, almost every article of clothing was stolen. For immediate duty there were only five local constables available. These men did good work, and did much execution with their truncheons, but against such odds their efforts to disperse the rioters failed and for nearly two hours the town was completely in the hands of the mob. Information of the sack was communicated

to the Chief Constable at the Llwynypia Colliery and at about 9 o'clock Insp. W. Hole, of the Glamorgan County Police, accompanied by Sergt. Harris and P.S. Pember, Swansea, and seven constables proceeded to Tonypandy. When the party reached the entrance to Gilfach Road they were warned not to proceed further as the road was in the possession of the rioters, who were heavily stoning certain houses. Undeterred by this warning Insp. Hole ordered the men to draw their staffs and to charge up the hill. Relating the incident to the writer Insp. Hole said :—" It was like going up the roof of a house, so steep is the hill. We were at once met with a terrific volley of stones, and several of the men were struck—Sergt. Harris receiving so violent a blow that the plate of his belt was doubled up." It was recognised that the strikers could only be dislodged by a flank movement and by a larger force, and the party retreated. Later on, however, Insp. Hole and his men succeeded in reaching Kenry Road, where they took up a position commanding that held by the rioters. Discovering they had been outflanked the rioters ran away, and by about 11 o'clock, when the first contingent of Metropolitan police, numbering 150, arrived on the scene, tranquillity had been practically restored. At any rate the arrival of the Metropolitans prevented more mischief. During the sack 63 shops and private houses, situated chiefly in Dunraven Street, Pandy Square, and DeWinton Street, had been either damaged or looted or both damaged and looted, and claims were afterwards sent in to the county authorities for compensation amounting in the aggregate to £2,260. The following morning all the ground floor windows in the main streets were barricaded, and that night at sunset the public houses were closed.

Disturbances at Aberaman.

Disturbances broke out in the Aberdare Valley simultaneously with those in the Rhondda Valley. Common in their origin with that of the outbreaks at Llwynypia, they were aimed at the stoppage of the machinery at the Powell Dyffryn Company's power station at Cwmbach and the intimidation into abstention from work of those servants of the Company who had resisted the efforts of the strikers to bring them out and had remained faithful to their employers. Of the attack on the washery and the power house Major Farquhar, D.S.O., prepared the following accurate and fairly full report :—

> " The number of police engaged, under Supt. Gill, was as follows :—Glamorgan police 19, and Cardiff City police 10 ; total 29.
>
> " At about 3 p.m. a crowd of about 150 men, women and children collected on the canal opposite the power station. As this crowd were shouting and using offensive language, all the police available proceeded to the spot and remained in a position out of the view of the crowd behind some of the

Company's trucks. As the conduct of this crowd though noisy was not dangerous the police did not consider it necessary to take further action at this time.

"At about 5 p.m. information was received that a large crowd was assembling outside the Aberaman Institute (about one mile from the power station). This crowd proceeded past the Gas Works towards Old Duffryn, where they were joined by a smaller crowd from Cwmbach. This crowd was estimated at between 2,500 and 3,000 people; it is probable that it included some women and children, but the great majority were men, most of whom had provided themselves with sticks. On the arrival of this crowd the situation became extremely critical. The miners swarmed over the fence between the towpath and the Great Western Railway, charged across the railway and threw a large number of stones which hit several of the police and broke an arc lamp and several windows; then the hose was turned upon them.

"The hose was ineffective, and the crowd came against the inner (live wire) fence, which they pulled up. Stones, clinkers and iron bolts were now thrown in considerable numbers, and it was at this moment that the casualties occurred amongst the police.

"Nearly every man had now been struck by a missile of some sort. The crowd was 10 to 20 yards within the wire fence and quite close to the power station: they had set fire to a truck of hay in the siding, and the situation was serious, owing to the great numerical disparity between the police and the miners and owing to the fact that the whole crowd was advancing on the power station, few, if any, men being left on the towing path.

"Superintendent Gill then gave the word to charge, and the police charged, driving the crowd along the towpath towards Cwmbach.

"While part of the police continued driving the crowd in this direction about half of them, under Inspector Rees, halted. The charge not only drove back the portion of the crowd immediately in front of the police, but caused the miners on the right to halt and fall back to the towpath.

"About 150 of these came and asked Inspector Rees to let them go home; he allowed them to do so, but they again began to throw stones and use abusive language, saying that they would get reinforcements and smash the police. Inspector Rees's party then charged this portion of the crowd, who retired towards Cwmbach; on their way there they were met by the police who had been pursuing the first crowd,

and were thus taken between two fires. Some of them here jumped into the canal to avoid the police. There was no further trouble that night: the actual fighting lasted about five minutes.

"As I understand is customary in Welsh Colliery disturbances, there were a number of women in the crowd. During the first charge it is possible that in the darkness some of these may have been injured by the police. As regards the second charge, however, Inspector Rees informs me that he saw no women in the crowd that passed him and was subsequently caught between the two parties of police."

Dealing with charges of brutality and drunkenness brought against the police, Major Farquhar reported:—

"The police absolutely deny that there was an intentional injuring of women and children, but admit that casualties may have occurred among them in the first rush. It has not been found possible to obtain any evidence for or against the instances of 'brutality' brought forward by Mr. Keir Hardie.* Individuals could not be recognised in the rough and tumble of such a fight in the darkness. The accusations are not made against individual constables but against the police as a body; to these accusations the police reply an indignant denial.

"I consider the accusation of drunkenness as not worth replying to. The forbearance shown by the police in the first instance and the disciplined manner in which they subsequently dispersed a formidable crowd which outnumbered them by 100 to 1, form a sufficient certificate of sobriety. As a matter of fact, the manager at the power station states that no drink at all was supplied to the police there during the whole day; the police reinforcements had most of them been on duty all night and had been sleeping during the morning, so that there was little opportunity to get drunk even if they had all been professional drunkards. Given the high character of the Glamorgan Police for steadiness and sobriety, such an accusation does not contain even a semblance of truth."

It may be desirable to supplement this account by one or two official facts. When the attack on the washery and power station began a crowd of about 500 rioters demonstrated against the Aberaman Colliery situated at a distance of about ¾ mile from the station. The colliery was defended by Inspector Knott, Aberdare, one sergeant, and 6 constables. This demonstration was a feint

*Mr. Keir Hardie had brought forward these charges in Parliament, and had demanded an enquiry. The Government repudiated the allegations and refused the enquiry.

in order if possible to weaken the defence of the power station ; but it failed in its aim, and under the cover of the night and by a circuitous route Inspector Knott and five of the eight men, in response to an urgent telephone message for assistance from the power station, proceeded to Cwmbach and joined their hard-pressed fellow officers unseen. The colliery was thus left in the charge of Sergt. Robinson and P.C. Bryce, and with the use of a fire hose these two men kept the crowd at bay till their departure half-an-hour later to Cwmbach.

In the Llwynypia disturbance all but one of the constables engaged were struck with stones or injured in some other manner. Some of the cases were not considered serious enough to enter on the journals of the police, but the cases entered on the official records show that of the foot constables over 40 per cent. were more or less seriously hurt, and that of the 18 mounted men 16 were afterwards treated for their injuries. Though only six casualties are given in connection with the attack on the Powell Dyffryn washery and power station, Inspector Rees stated that every one of the constables engaged in that riot was slightly or seriously injured. Of the toll in blood, broken skulls and damaged limbs among the rioters there is no authentic record, but the authority of the Glamorgan County Police is behind the statement that over 500 persons are known to have suffered injury. The scene on the road between the Glamorgan Colliery and Tonypandy after the last of the police sorties is stated to have resembled a battlefield, so numerous were the disabled rioters and so gory the appearance of a large number of them. So far as is known, however, only one terminated fatally. That was the case of Samuel Rays, of Partridge Road, Tonypandy, who died three days after the Llwynypia affair.

Over 500 Rioters injured, one fatally.

At the inquest on the body, held at Porth, on Thursday, December 15th, medical evidence showed that deceased had suffered from three scalp wounds, each about two inches long, and two penetrating to the bone, and that the skull had been fractured over the temple and the right ear. How the injuries were caused was not shown, and the jury returned the following verdict :—

> " That we agree that Samuel Rays died from injuries he received on November 8th caused by some blunt instrument. The evidence is not sufficiently clear to us how he received those injuries."

In the course of the evidence the following statements were made by the police witnesses :—

> Inspector Parfitt, Bristol said that he was in charge of 18 mounted policemen and in an attempt about four o'clock to prevent an attack on the power station found it necessary

to charge the crowd. No truncheons were used, but 11 of his men and 5 of the horses were struck and in some cases severely injured by stones, and they had to retire.

Sergt. Smith said he and his men failed to dislodge those of the strikers who had taken up positions in the plantation on the hillside opposite the colliery.

Deputy Chief Constable Cole said the strikers paid no heed to the message of the Home Secretary counselling peaceful method when it was read to them by the Chief Constable, and closed around the police who under his charge were drawn up at the entrance to the colliery. Batons were drawn, and in the encounter, during which they were attacked in the rear as well as in front, 35 constables were injured, some of them having to be sent home in consequence.

Capt. Lindsay, the Chief Constable, said that when the evening attack was made on the colliery the mounted police were helpless, and for some time the foot police were huddled under the walls sheltering from the stones which fell in showers among them. When batons were drawn six or eight constables were incapacitated at every charge ; the injured deputy chief constable had to be carried into the yard for safety, and for a long time it was a case of " touch and go." The crowd retaliated blow for blow, and it was a question whether the police would succeed or no. The batons were smashed by the weapons in the hands of the mob, and his officers complained to him, " What's the good of a thing like this against a mandril ? "

Supt. A. Thomas said the crowd would certainly have taken the colliery but for the charges made by the police.

Movement of Troops.

The disorders which have been described in the preceding pages forced the hands of the Government, and it is here of importance to indicate the policy and to state in chronological order the acts of the Home and War Offices. The facts already stated show that the demand of the Chief Constable of Glamorgan was for military and primarily for infantry support ; that military support in the form of 200 cavalry and two companies of infantry had been despatched from Salisbury Plain in the early hours of the morning of the 8th in response to urgent requests from the Chief Constable, and were timed to arrive at Pontypridd before daybreak on the 8th ; and that the troops had been held up en route under the orders of the Home Secretary acting together with the Minister of War (Mr. Haldane). The view of the Government was not at this stage the view of the chief man on the spot. After the troops had been held up a conference took place between Mr. Churchill, Mr. Haldane, General Ewart

(Adjutant General), Sir Edward Troup, and Sir Edward Henry, and at this conference the policy agreed upon in view of the situation as it then stood was that of rendering constabulary instead of military support. Emergencies, however, were to be reckoned upon, and the Government compromised its civil force policy to the extent of giving permission for the movement of two squadrons into the district. Effect was given to these measures by the arrangement for the despatch from Paddington at 4.45 p.m. of 100 mounted and 200 Metropolitan constables, and by the resumed progress of the cavalry. In communicating these arrangements to the Chief Constable the Home Secretary telegraphed at 1.30 p.m. :—" The county will bear the cost. Expect these forces will be sufficient, but as a further precautionary measure 200 cavalry will be moved into the district to-night and remain there pending cessation of trouble. Infantry meanwhile will be at Swindon." At 2.30, as a result of a telephonic conversation between the Home Secretary and the Chief Constable—who pointed out the local difficulties of accommodation for cavalry—instructions, with the concurrence of the Chief Constable, were sent by the Home Secretary to the Adjutant General to stop the cavalry at Cardiff, " where," he said, " they may have to remain for a few days," and at 6.30 the following telegram from Mr. Churchill was received by the Chief Constable :—

> " War Office have given instructions for the cavalry to be stopped at Cardiff, where they will remain for a few days. General Macready will be in command and has authority to take them further in case of grave emergency. If emergency arises so serious that police cannot cope with it you should communicate with him."

At 6.30 p.m., when the attack on the Powell Dyffryn power house had already taken place, and when the seige of the Llwynypia Colliery was still in progress, General Macready arrived at Cardiff simultaneously with the leading cavalry squadron, and he reached Pontypridd at 8.10 p.m. At that moment the rioters were sacking Tonypandy. These disturbances, reported by telephone to the Home Secretary, and a pressing demand from the magistrates for immediate military assistance, caused a further change in the military plans, and at 8.15 Mr. Churchill telegraphed the Chief Constable informing him that he had " authorised General Macready, if you desire it, to move all the cavalry into the disturbed district without delay." The practical effect given to these instructions from London was the despatch from Cardiff to Pontypridd—a town six miles by rail from Llwynypia and 10¾ miles from Aberaman—of the first squadron of the 18th Hussars, who reached their destination by 10.30 p.m., and the giving of orders at 1.20 a.m., Wednesday, November 9th, to Colonel Currey at Cardiff to despatch the second

squadron of the 18th Hussars so as to reach Pontypridd at 8.15 a.m. The Metropolitans arrived at Pontypridd shortly after nine o'clock on the evening of the 8th, and by 10.30 p.m. 150 foot constables had been sent to Tonypandy and 50 foot and 100 mounted men to Aberaman. The London police arrived in time to see the end of the riot at Tonypandy, but they took no active part in the suppression of that disturbance, and as will have been seen from the facts given the cavalry were not even within striking distance till after the havoc of this memorable night's work had been done. When the story of Tonypandy was told in the Press the following day the action of the Home Secretary in delaying the intervention of the troops provoked a great deal of hostile criticism in the county as well as in the country generally. It is clear from the facts that had the troops asked for by the Chief Constable, on Monday, November 8th, been allowed to proceed uninterrupted they would have had ample time to reach mid-Rhondda hours prior to the earliest of the following day's disorders. The point, however, as to whether the presence of the troops would have had a restraining effect on the strikers and prevented that night's rioting, or, rather, have aggravated—if that had been possible—the evil and led to the reading of the Riot Act, and, perhaps, to an order to fire, excited much controversy. Governments in this country are very chary in lending their sanction to the employment of military forces in the suppression of civil disorders arising from conflicts between capital and labour. In Great Britain during the last 41 years troops have been called out on 27 occasions, but in only four cases (including the Liverpool and Llanelly cases of August, 1911) has the order to fire been given. In such crises the bias of the Home and War offices has been to err rather on the side of caution than of precipitancy. In this particular case, however, the attitude of the Home Office towards the original application of the Chief Constable for the importation of infantry was more hostile than circumspect, and in view of the sympathetic telegram sent by the Home Office to the strikers—and of the fact that a General Election was impending—that attitude seemed to many minds to have been prompted more by considerations of political expediency than by an impartial determination to apply Government forces to maintain the peace and protect life and property. At any rate it was an attitude which ignored the lessons of the strikes of 1893 and 1898, when the presence of troops had a decidedly pacificatory effect on the strikers and admittedly prevented a great deal of rioting, and which disregarded the opinion of the man on the spot in the person of the Chief Constable. It was an attitude, however, which was profoundly modified by the events of the night of November 8th; and which in the end was completely abandoned. Let the facts of Tonypandy

Criticism of Home Secretary's Action.

and Aberaman speak for themselves. The Home Secretary adhered to his plan of compelling the local magistrates and Chief Constable to depend on the police, and on Wednesday several contingents of Metropolitan police were sent down to South Wales, bringing the combined constabulary force under the command of Capt. Lindsay to 1,100, of whom 120 were mounted ; but on Wednesday morning the two squadrons of cavalry were patrolled through Aberaman and Llwynypia, where one of them was allowed to remain all day in a good position overlooking the Glamorgan Colliery ; infantry were drafted into the mid-Rhondda district ; and in the evening the cavalry left temporarily in charge of the Glamorgan Colliery were relieved by 4 officers and 100 men of the Lancashire Fusiliers, another company of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment was in reserve at Pontypridd, a third company, belonging to the West Riding Regiment, was at Cardiff, and two more of the Devonshire Regiment and the Royal Munster Fusiliers were at Newport. Of these 500 infantry only one company was in a position to render immediate service in case of a renewed attempt to take the Glamorgan Colliery. It was that stationed at Llwynypia ; but here the presence of the soldiers was so great a restraint on the strikers that neither on that or any other day during the whole period of the strike was another combined attempt made to sack the colliery. This fact, and other facts which will be brought to light later on, may be left to supply their own comments on the use of the military in strike disorders.

Mr. Churchill's Replies to Miners and Employers.

Meanwhile it will be useful to refer to the correspondence in regard to the use of the military which passed between the Home Secretary and his executive of officers at Cardiff, and between the Home Secretary and the representatives of the workmen and of the employers.

The most important of the private telegrams dispatched on November 9th by Mr. Churchill were one received by General Macready and another sent about the same time to the Chief Constable. In his instructions to General Macready the Home Secretary wired :—

> " If the emergency comes to the point where the police and civil authorities apply to you for the direct use of the military, you should then assume general control and act as you think best for the preservation of order and the prevention of bloodshed. You will at the last moment consider whether the police forces can be used any further to quell riot without actually involving the military . . . . You and the authorities on the spot should bear in mind that vigorous action by the police may be the best means of preventing recourse to firearms."

In his message to the Chief Constable the Secretary of State wrote :

> " I have told General Macready to proceed to-night to Tonypandy to support you. You will, I am sure, work with him with the utmost cordiality. Please to express to the police officers under your charge, particularly those who bore the strain yesterday, my appreciation of the courage, discipline, and good spirit which they have shown throughout these troubles. Their fine qualities are the only means of averting the employment of the military. You should proclaim throughout the town that all well-meaning citizens should remain in their homes to-night, and that sightseers expose themselves to considerable risks by mingling with the crowd."

The action taken by the Home Secretary satisfied neither the coalowners nor the workmen. When Mr. Churchill was sending the above messages a conference of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain in London was condemning the use of the military in the strike as an unnecessary interference with civil liberty, and the following resolution was passed unanimously :—

> " That this conference, having heard the report of the South Wales representatives regarding the serious situation which has arisen in South Wales, whilst regretting the disturbances which have occurred, consider the civil forces sufficient to deal with such disturbances, and will strongly deprecate the employment of the military for such purpose ; and if the military have been sent into the districts affected, asks the Home Secretary at once to recall them."

This resolution was communicated to Mr. Churchill by Mr. T. Ashton, the Secretary of the M.F.G.B., who the same evening received the following sharp reply :—

" Home Secretary to Miners' Federation.

" Home Office.

" Dear Sir, " November 9th.

" I am directed by the Home Secretary to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and resolution. Mr. Churchill hopes and expects that the strong force of police drafted to the scene of the disorder will be sufficient promptly and effectively to prevent riot. If, however, this is not so he will not hesitate after what has occurred to authorise the employment of the military, and the responsibility for any consequences which may ensue must rest with those who persist in courses of violence.

" I am, etc.,

" S. W. Harris.

" Thomas Ashton, Esq."

The correspondence on the subject which passed between the Home Secretary and the South Wales Coalowners' Association was in the following terms :—

" Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners' Association to Home Secretary.

" Sir, " Cardiff, November 10, 1910.

" Yesterday I sent you the following telegram :—

' The Committee of the Associated Colliery Owners of South Wales in meeting to-day desire to draw your attention to the absolute necessity of additional military being brought into the district and stationed at those places where the disturbances are occurring. The owners are thoroughly convinced that the present arrangements are quite inadequate for the protection of life and property.'

" I learn indirectly that additional military and police have been sent into the district under your instructions and your action in this respect is much appreciated by the owners.

" I have been instructed by the Members of this Association to very strongly protest against the delay which occurred in the sending of the troops into the district in the first instance and to say that the owners attribute the serious rioting which has occurred both in the Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys to the lack of a sufficiently protective force.

" As no doubt you are aware the magistrates at Aberdare on Saturday last and the magistrates in the Rhondda Valley on Monday pointed out the seriousness of the position and the necessity for the military being sent at once and the colliery owners regret that this course was not followed and so avoid the rioting and consequent damage which took place.

" I am, &c.,
" W. Gascoyne Dalziel,
" Secretary.

" The Right Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P."

" Home Office to Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners' Association.

" Sir, " Home Office, November 12, 1910.

" I have laid before the Secretary of State your letter of the 10th instant and I am directed to say, for the information of the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners' Association, that he is unable to accept the view that a premature display of military force would have had the effect of preventing the rioting which occurred on Tuesday last. It is not unlikely that it might have had precisely the opposite effect.

" I am to add that the Secretary of State received no communic-

ation from the Aberdare or the Rhondda Valley magistrates either on Saturday or on Monday last.

"I am, &c.,

"The Secretary to the "Edward Troup.
"Mon. and South Wales
"Coalowners' Association, Cardiff."

Saving of the Mine and the Horses.

After this perhaps not inapposite digression let us return to the situation at the Glamorgan Colliery. There the concentration, first, of a squadron of cavalry, and afterwards of a company of infantry, produced order where there had been chaos and established peace where for 48 hours previously there had been open terrorism and frequent and violent conflicts between mob and police. This improvement, too, was not peculiar to Llwynypia. It reflected to a considerable degree the change which had come over the whole of the strike area. That change may not have been due entirely though apparently mainly to the presence of the troops. The flooding of the two valleys with Metropolitan police, an improved constabulary patrol service, the bitter memories of and the sobering thoughts produced by the previous night's conflicts, and the absence in London of the local strike leaders as the result of a request for an interview by the Board of Trade, may have contributed towards the improvement; but whether it was due to one or to all these causes the change was so great that no serious occurrence took place on the 9th of November, and on the 10th the Home Office was able to report that "absolute order had been maintained around all the threatened collieries," and that the "whole situation in the Rhondda Valley is completely under the control of the police." So impressed indeed was the Home Secretary with the reports sent to him that on November 10th he went so far as to rashly commit himself to the following public indiscreet revelation of his intentions:—"No need for the employment of the military is likely to occur. They will be kept as far as possible out of contact with the population, while sufficiently near the scene to be available if necessary." Advantage was taken of the respite to bring to the surface some of the entombed horses at the Cambrian and other collieries, and with a plentiful supply of officials and of volunteers the owners did not find it advisable or necessary to put to a test an appeal from the Home Office to the miners on strike "to make all necessary provision if the management want men to raise the horses from all the pits as soon as possible." This appeal was addressed from the Home Office signed by the deputation which had proceeded to London to wait on the Board of Trade, but the colliery owners had previously made their own arrangements for the safety of their horses, and did not therefore consider it necessary to accept the assistance of

workmen who a few hours previously had been engaged in a desperate attempt, which, had it succeeded, would not only have drowned 300 horses at the Glamorgan Colliery, but have caused considerable damage to the underground workings. The text of reply of the management to the message from the Board of Trade was in the following terms :—

> " Glad to say horses, so far as we have been able to inspect them, are all right, and have now been fed and watered Do not propose bringing them out of the mine this cold weather. No renewal of rioting since the arrival of the military. We shall now be able to look after the horses without any assistance from outside."

Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, the general manager, whose determination and courage against such heavy odds had excited the admiration of the whole country, and had drawn messages of congratulation from almost every quarter of the globe, had held successfully his Fort Chabrol, and he was pledged to see the " thing through " in his own way. On Tuesday, to a representative of the Press he had said :—" I am going to stick to my post, and these men who you see around me are going to stick to me. I will be under that floor before I give in this time. It is not because I am stubborn that I say this, but what would life be in the future if we gave in now." Mr. Llewelyn deplored the delay in the arrival of the military, but he had borne the brunt of the second and what afterwards proved to be the final siege in force of the colliery, and on Wednesday he emerged secretly from the Glamorgan Colliery power station, made a hurried, but armed, secret visit to the Cambrian Colliery at Clydach Vale, and after completing arrangements there for the safety of the 300 horses underground, returned unmolested to attend to the more critical situation at the Glamorgan Colliery. His chief, and not less heroic assistant there was Mr. Hedley Clarke, and that gentleman's own story of the saving of the colliery, and of the risks undergone during the seige, was given to the writer in the following words :—

> " The first incident which raised in us a real fear that the mine was being drowned, and that all the horses below ground had perished, occurred on Tuesday afternoon. It was the sudden stopping of the fan and the discovery immediately afterwards that the ventilating current had reversed. Instead of ascending we found the air descending No. 2 pit, and that it was coming through No. 6 Pit, which is the main return for Nos. 1 and 2 Pits. Our immediate inference was that the air was short-circuited from No. 1 Pit, that the whole of No. 2 Pit had fouled, and that the lives of the horses, if they had not been already sacrificed, might

be reckoned by minutes. Face to face with these imminent risks, we concentrated our efforts to get steam up in order to restart the fan. We found, however, that the water was rapidly gaining upon us in No. 4 Pit, which is sunk to the No. 3 Rhondda seam, and that the only thing for us to do was to stick to the pumps. The water had already began to flow into the steam coal pits. It was a desperate fight, calling for more concentrated energy than had been exercised since the enginemen and stokers had deserted their duties, and we were very doubtful indeed as to whether the exhausted condition of the officials who had volunteered their services, and who had already been attending to the furnaces and the boilers unceasingly since Monday morning, would be able to stand the strain of keeping up sufficient steam to maintain both fan and pumps in operation. Bordering on a state of collapse they rose to the occasion, but after some few hours more labour the strain passed beyond the breaking point, and several of the stokers fainted at the boilers. All that was humanly possible had been done, and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn came to the conclusion that we must at last shut down, and trust to the fates that things underground were not so bad as we feared they were. The fires thereupon were damped down, and the fan stopped. This was at 4 a.m. Wednesday morning. After four hours sleep in the power house the men were awakened and another determined effort was made to raise steam. Later in the day Mr. Llewelyn, myself, and two electrical engineers decided to descend No. 4 Pit and attempt to reach the underground pumping station. We went down slowly, and when near the pit bottom found that it contained from 10ft to 12ft. of water, and that the pump-house flooring had been wrecked. The fear suggested by this discovery that water had already reached both the pumps and the motor which drives them brought down our hopes of saving the mine to zero point. The cage was stopped just above the water, and almost immediately by the side of the archway in which the pumps are installed. Clinging to one of the pipes through which the water is sent to the surface, we crawled face downwards along it into the pump-house, and succeeded in reaching the first pump installed on the right hand side of a 20ft roadway. On hands and knees we made our way along the shaft, and eventually got to the motor and found that the water was then within an inch of the coils. The great difficulty with which we were now confronted was that of getting to the pumps on the left hand side. The floor of the pump-house

had floated away. Clinging to the pumps we were in a rather precarious condition, and immediately below us was a water depth of anything from 10ft. to 12ft. With a dive, however, one of us succeeded in overcoming the difficulty without mishap, and the other members of the party were then assisted across. We found that what is known as the starting panel of the motor was actually under water, but by cutting two wires and rejoining them above we put matters straight for an immediate restart. There was no time to loose. As rapidly as possible we reascended the shaft, rushed to the power station, and you may imagine with what gusto we shouted our joy when, after putting in the pump switchboard, we found the pumps working properly. Had they failed us at that moment, and the pumps been damaged by the rising water, the drowning of the colliery could not have been prevented. In another quarter of an hour the pumps would have been destroyed and a water rush of from 80,000 to 100,000 gallons per hour would have commenced to flood the whole of the workings. The pumps could not have been replaced, and assuming that new pumps were installed higher in the shaft they could not have been installed in less than a fortnight, and in that period there would be in the colliery over 30,000,000 gallons of water."

It is only right that this story should be supplemented by the statement of the fact that it was Mr. Clarke himself who dived into the underground surging flood, and made the human bridge by which the other members of the party were able to ascertain the condition of the motors. The party engaged in this descent was not only able to reach, but also to feed and water the horses. "I expected," said Mr. Llewelyn, "to find them wild, but instead of that they were weak and exhausted, and the poor creatures were whining like children." The fate of the horses had excited the sympathy of His Majesty King George himself, and in reply to the Royal enquiries General Macready and Mr. Llewelyn were on November 11th able to inform His Majesty that they had been watered and fed and were in fine condition.

CHAPTER III.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN STRIKERS AND POLICE.

A Guerilla War.—Employers under Restraints.—Their plea for adequate Protection.—Importation of outside Colliery Labour alien to South Wales.—Custom since 1871.—Necessity for continuous operation of Pumping.—A brief stoppage may utterly destroy underground workings.—Intimidation of Colliery Officials.—Strikers' ineffective appeal to the Home Secretary.—Cross-currents.—Board of Trade Mediation Premature.—The Chief Constable fears outrage in consequence of Socialistic speeches.—Strikers' request to interview "Blacklegs."—Mr. Leonard Llewelyn's Refusal.—Relations between General Macready and the Coalowners.—Home Secretary's Instructions concerning imported labour.—General Macready explains his policy and plans of action.—The Police must exhaust all their available resources before they ask for active Military assistance.—General Macready's errors of Fact.—Allotment of Troops.—Cynon Colliery Disturbances.—Colonel Wright's warning.—Friction between a Colliery Manager and a Police Officer.—Sharp Correspondence between Home Secretary and the Coalowners' Association.—Privations of Strikers and the Police.

A Guerilla War.

After the routs at Llwynypia and Aberaman the campaign of the strikers against the collieries assumed a new and in many respects a more insidious and reprehensible phase. The purpose of the campaign remained the same; but movements against the collieries in massed bodies were temporarily abandoned for a guerilla war on those officials who had remained faithful to their contracts and to their employers. The strikers had committed themselves to this method of industrial warfare at the very beginning of the strike. They realised that if labour were regularly and plentifully available for the working of the ventilating and pumping machinery the colliery owners could hold out against them indefinitely, and that in the end they (the strikers) were bound to be defeated. Thus their aim was to prevent at any cost such labour reaching the colliery or, if it had reached the colliery, to frighten it out again. That end achieved, the only courses then left open to the colliery owners would be surrender to the demands of the workmen or the abandonment of their properties.

Under the conditions of the conflict either of those alternatives was, of course, unthinkable. What the employers were not

prepared to concede to argument or expediency they were not likely to grant to force; and as the methods by which the workmen were attempting to achieve their purpose were subversive of the fundamental principles of civil order and a grave menace to the liberty of the subject and to the safety of private property the State itself in its own collective welfare as well as in the interests of every one of its members was bound to interfere. These are the very elements of civil government; but the strikers either could not or would not see this. At any rate they failed to recognise the line of demarcation between the inherent rights of the subject and common law on the one hand, and the incidental rights conferred upon trades unionism by the Trades Disputes Act of 1906 on the other. To them "peaceful picketting" was synonymous with intimidation of the worst type, and trade union with mob law. Any workman who gave his service to the colliery owners was a "blackleg" and any person or institution which aided the colliery owners in the protection of their property was an enemy of the working man, a traitor to trade unionism, and a friend of Capital. It did not make an iota of difference to the strikers that the owners of the idle collieries, so far from proposing the importation of men to work coal, never even contemplated such a course.

Employers under Restraint.

Theoretically the South Wales coalowners, like other employers, are free to employ what labour they like subject to economic conditions, and can call upon the State to provide them the necessary protection; practically, however, the strength of organised labour in the coalfield denies them that freedom; and no attempt has been made to import outside labour on a large scale since 1871. Even on that occasion, when laws against workmen's combinations were still in force, and when the miners were very poorly organised, the attempt failed. There were strikes in the coalfield in 1873, 1875, 1879, 1893, and in 1898; but on none of these occasions was local mining replaced by outside labour, and each of the strikes was fought out within the limits of local resources. As we have already seen, there was a proposal to "flood the pits" in 1898. Mabon, on that occasion, set his face dead against it, and he had his way. The men saw with Mabon that the greatest sufferers from the drowning of the mines would be the miners themselves. There is perhaps no industry where depreciation and delapidation are so rapid than they are in the underground workings of the mining industry. A few weeks idleness and inattention will undo the results of years of patient labour and of an enormous capital expenditure.

Nature does not take at all too kindly to the exploitation of her mineral wealth; and let the hand which grips that wealth once relax its hold, then nature brings into operation forces which

very quickly cover up its traces, and either the burrowing, with its heavy charge on human life as well as on labour and capital, has to be done all over again, or the search for the wealth has to be abandoned. To the leaders, however, of the Cambrian Combine and Aberdare Valley strikes—men who, though in some cases possessing considerable natural ability, were indifferently educated, had had little or no official experience of leadership, and were all avowed Socialists—these considerations had no weight, and when they realised that they had been beaten in their efforts to get possession of the pits they concentrated their energies in an attempt to starve the pits of any and every form of labour—"from Mr. Llewelyn down."

A picketting system was organised which left no access to the collieries unguarded or any colliery official's residence unwatched; and in some of the districts small bodies of desperadoes prowled at night on mischevious purposes. On the night of November 10th an unsuccessful attempt was made to cut off the water supply of the Cambrian Colliery at Clydach Vale; at Llwynypia, at a moment when the workmen in the power station were straining every effort to prevent the drowning of the Glamorgan pit, the colliery water supply was diverted and the supply in the boilers had fallen so low that the fires had to be damped down till the cause of the failure had been ascertained and the flow restored; and on November 13th it was discovered that between November 4th and that date a powder magazine at the Nantgwyn Colliery, Penygraig, had been broken into and robbed of 25 electric detonators, 50lbs. of Stowite cartridges, 15lbs. of Samsonite $\frac{5}{8}$ cartridges, and a coil fuse. In addition to these outrages many cases of intimidation and physical violence towards colliery officials were reported. These attacks on men who were not members of the Miners' Federation and who were employed on surface work deterred several of the little band of workmen who had kept at work from continuing in the employment of the companies. A few of them communicated with Mr. Llewelyn stating that they were afraid to leave their wives and children at home defenceless. Some of the men afterwards accepted an offer made by Mr. Llewelyn to bear the expense of the removal of their families to relatives or friends in other parts of the country; a few of the officials had themselves taken this course earlier in the week; but the defections had been too numerous to maintain a regular and adequate supply of labour even for the limited purpose of pumping, and the Glamorgan Company decided to import labour through the agency of the Shipping Federation. The first batch, numbering 34, and consisting almost exclusively of stokers, arrived at Llwynypia on the afternoon of Friday November 11th, and at half-past five that afternoon the supply of steam was for the first time since the previous Sunday ample enough

to enable the pumping engines to yield their normal flow of water. This action, however, on the part of the Company enraged the strikers, and the same evening the following telegram was addressed to the Home Secretary :—

> "Will you immediately take steps in a matter of life and death? We have offered our services in assisting the management of the Cambrian Combine Collieries to raise and feed the horses. This has been refused. Blacklegs are introduced. If, indeed, you will assist us in putting down riots send at once and stop this blacklegging; otherwise, as local leaders, we refuse to be responsible for what is more than certain to happen.—(Signed) Naval Committee, Cambrian Combine."

To this message the Home Secretary replied laconically, "Your telegram received. Have communicated it to local authorities."

In view of what did actually happen later on it may be well to keep in mind the threat of retaliatory measures conveyed in the concluding words of the workmen's telegram; but for the moment we may perhaps usefully retrace our steps, and indicate briefly some of the under-currents and the cross-currents which were at work while the events described above were in progress. It will have been observed that while the strikers were engaged in a guerilla war against the Companies and those of the workmen who had remained faithful to the conditions of their contracts of service the district agent (Mr. D. Watts Morgan) and other representatives of the miners were in London parleying with the Board of Trade. Beyond placing Mr. G. R. Askwith in possession of the workmen's case, the only product of that conference was the message addressed to the strikers appealing to them to suspend hostilities and to render all the assistance they could to the owners to raise the horses to the surface; but after meeting the leaders of the men the Board of Trade communcated with the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners' Association, and on Saturday, November 12th, a conference took place at the Engineers' Institute, Cardiff, between two of the leading permanent officials of the Board of Trade and the principal colliery owners affected by the strikes. The official report of that conference was in the following terms :—

Cross-currents.

> "Mr. Askwith, K.C., and Mr. Mitchell, of the Board of Trade, were at Cardiff to-day, and met Mr. F. L. Davis, Chairman of the owners side of the Conciliation Board, Mr. Joseph Shaw, and Mr. E. M. Hann, of the Powell Dyffryn Company; Mr. D. A. Thomas, M.P., and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, of the Cambrian Combine; Sir Clifford J. Cory, Bart., M.P., Gelli Colliery; Mr. W. J. Heppell, Cwmaman Colliery; Mr. W. H. Mewton, Cilely Colliery; and Mr. Gascoyne

Dalziel, Secretary of the Coalowners. The interview, which had reference to the stoppages at the Powell Dyffryn collieries, the collieries of the Cambrian Combine, the Bwllfa, Cwmaman, and Gelli collieries, lasted some considerable time, and matters pertaining to these stoppages were fully discussed; but the proceedings were private, and it was decided that no report be given to the press."

At this conference it was made clear to the Board of Trade that the only hope of successful intervention lay in the immediate resumption of work at the collieries in the Aberdare Valley—where every one of the 11,000 or more miners was out on strike in violation of his contract engagements and in contravention of the provisions of the Conciliation Board Agreement—and in the acceptance by the miners in the Rhondda Valley of the terms of settlement of October 22nd. The Board of Trade had previously been made only too well aware of the temper of the men to have any doubts as to the attitude they would adopt towards such demands, and whatever hopes had been entertained of a successful mediation at this stage of the trouble were now abandoned.

Socialistic Influences.

On Sunday, November 13th, meetings were addressed by Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. C. B. Stanton. Both speakers condemned wanton violence, but Mr. Hardie fully associated himself with the revolt of the workmen and encouraged them with the hope that they were bound to win, while Mr. Stanton, though expressing himself as opposed to looting and wanton destruction of property, said he was going to ask every lodge in the district for volunteers to form "an emergency fighting brigade, armed with broken bottles and pepper, who would set their faces dead against police and military, and protect the unarmed, disorganised, defenceless crowd." An impenetrable veil of mystery seems to hide the achievements of this phantom brigade!

Writing to the Home Secretary on November 14th, the Chief Constable reported that "desperate measures were said to be contemplated in consequence of the socialistic speeches" made at this meeting, and as a precautionary measure he had during Sunday night increased the force at Tonypandy by 50 extra constables.

Guileless Message to Home Secretary.

Another visitor to the district at this time was a Mr. J. F. Moylan, a confidential officer of the Home Office. He arrived on November 9th, and, in addition to being in the confidence of the military and civil authorities, was frequently in consultation with the Cambrian Combine Strike Committee. One of this gentleman's guileless messages to the Home Office was in the following terms, dated November 12th:—

"Mr. Thomas, the Stipendiary, has had a long interview with

some of the miners' leaders. They promised to take steps to make known their disapproval of rioting; will hold a meeting and pass resolution and placard the town to that effect. They will also try to form a sub-committee to co-operate with the magistrates in preventing and suppressing disorder by giving information of any movement or decision of riotous character but they cannot undertake to be responsible for anything if 'blacklegs' remain or are imported. As a first step they want permission to send four men into Glamorgan Colliery to interview 'blacklegs' and try peacefully persuade them to come out. If this is not allowed by Mr. Llewelyn they wish Home Office to turn out 'blacklegs.' They do not object to police guarding colliery property but to their protecting 'blacklegs.' They are also still prepared to meet Mr. Llewelyn and arrange to supply men sufficient to bring up horses and that these men will be trustworthy. They also objected that police were interfering with pickets when peacefully persuading 'blacklegs.' This is being looked into.—Moylan, Tonypandy."

It will be well to leave the events of the ensuing weeks to suggest their own comment on the value of the promises reported in this message to have been made by the leaders, but it will be observed that the only reference to the proceedings taken by the strikers against colliery officials—whom the message insults by its undiscriminating application to them, as well as to the imported stokers, of the term "blacklegs"—is the complaint by the strikers of alleged interference by the police, and the promise that "this is being looked into." How well it was looked into may be judged from the following message sent by Mr. Moylan to the Home Secretary later in the day:—

"Stipendiary saw Mr. Llewelyn, who refuses absolutely to meet Cambrian Combine Committee over question of horses, and of course refuses to allow them to send men into mine to interview 'blacklegs.' The Committee are reported to be taking steps for preservation of order indicated in my telegram this afternoon. Police have been instructed as to not interfering with pickets and it has been arranged that authorised pickets shall all wear white badges.—Moylan, Pontypridd."

We shall hear something more of Mr. Moylan, but his reports and the correspondence between the Coalowners Association and the Home Secretary give a pretty broad indication of the differences which existed between the colliery owners and the representatives of the Government. It has been pointed out that the owners had no intention or desire to replace the colliers on strike by imported miners;

all the labour they required was such as would suffice to save their properties from destruction and their officials from molestation and outrage ; and they held that the least they had the right to expect from the State was a degree of protection adequate for these purposes. In spite of the strong measures taken by the strikers to prevent every workman " from Mr. Llewelyn down " entering the collieries there were plenty of workmen willing to give their service to the employers if they were guaranteed protection from violence. These were the local conditions. The manner in which they were met by the Government is shown in the following quotations from the official documents :—

" Home Secretary to General Macready.

(Telegram, sent at 9.25 p.m. on November 11th, in reply to an inquiry made by General Macready over the telephone).

" You are entitled in conjunction with Chief Constable to require mine managers under protection of police and military to inform you beforehand of any importation of outside labour in order that disturbance may not be unexpectedly provoked. You are further entitled after such notification has been given you to require that such labour shall not be imported unless your arrangements for maintaining order have reached such a point that safety is in all circumstances assured. I consulted the law officers on this point on the troubles at Newport in May. On these lines you should be able to avert injudicious or provocative action.—Home Secretary."

That same day at a conference with Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn (Cambrian Combine), Mr. E. M. Hann (Powell Dyffryn Company), Capt. Lindsay (Chief Constable), Sir Marchant Williams (Aberdare Stipendiary), and Mr. Lleufer Thomas (Pontypridd Stipendiary), General Macready informed the colliery owners plainly that he " could not allow the troops to act in any way as police, and warned them that the individual homes of any of their workmen who were still working in the collieries but who lived scattered about the neighbourhood could not be adequately protected, and I told them that they should make arrangements to send the families of these men away to a safe place and to bring the men themselves into the colliery. I informed them of the general rôle which would be pursued by the troops in suppressing disorder, viz., that active measures would only be taken in the event of the civil police having exhausted all their available resources."

The Conference at which these declarations of policy were made had been called to consider arrangements to be made in the event of the bulk of the Metropolitan police (who at this time numbered 802) being withdrawn. The official proposal was an approximate force of 50 mounted and 300 foot Metropolitan police in addition to local

police available, supported by regular troops. Mr. E. M. Hann protested strongly against their having been called together to consider, not the best means of preserving the peace and the protection of property, but to make the best arrangements with a restricted force given to them. Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. Llewelyn supported this protest, and added that they considered any withdrawal of police impracticable unless the situation changed considerably. In convening this conference and in proposing the limitation of the Metropolitans to 350 General Macready was acting under the instructions of the Home Secretary, and in spite of the views expressed by the colliery managers he proceeded with his task of preparing a scheme for "holding the valleys and maintaining order during the next three weeks." On November 13th he communicated his scheme to the Home Secretary, and accompanied it by a remarkable letter giving what is described as a "clear indication" of the position. How clear that exposition was may be judged from a criticism of the statements made in the letter. The General opens it with the following remark :—"Information to hand leads to the belief that the men at this moment demand the total suspension of all labour, except on the part of the owners and a few officials." "At this moment" is November 13th. On that day General Macready learns apparently for the first time of a policy of action to which the strikers had committed themselves when they struck work and which they had since been prosecuting so relentlessly and so successfully that since November 7th every grade of workman had been kept out of all the Cambrian Combine mid-Rhondda pits except the Glamorgan Colliery, and that at the Britannic Merthyr Colliery the stoppage of the machinery was rapidly causing the flooding of the mine. His phrase, too, "except on the part of the owners and a few officials," followed as it is by the statement that "this, of course, would mean the closing down of all the mines," was obviously written under a complete misapprehension of the position.

General Macready's Errors.

The simple fact which General Macready overlooked—excusably perhaps in a soldier who had no personal knowledge of labour conditions in the coalfield—was that the term "officials" does not apply simply to men engaged on clerical work but also to managers, under-managers, master hauliers, firemen and deputy firemen, overmen, and the foremen of the various workshops, and had the colliery owners been allowed to employ unmolested every official in their service there would have been no necessity to import a single outside labourer, while had they been allowed by the strikers to employ those of the workmen who were willing to work they would not only have been able to keep the ventilating and pumping machinery in motion, but to have kept the underground workings in a proper state of repair. The strikers applied the term

"blackleg" to every official who permitted himself to be employed in any service but his regular occupation, but judging from his report General Macready does not seem to have been aware of this fact. General Macready goes on to state that "at the present moment the number of 'blacklegs' employed at the Cambrian Combine pits is 30 and at the Aberaman pits 258." If by the term "blackleg" General Macready here means an imported labourer he is not far wrong in the case of the Cambrian Combine. About that number of imported stokers were at the time employed at the Glamorgan Colliery, but he is hopelessly wide of the mark in the case of Aberaman (or properly the Aberdare Valley pits of the Powell Duffryn Company). At the pits of the Powell Duffryn Company there was not a single labourer imported during the whole period of the strike. The number given by General Macready is probably that of the colliery officials who were at work; while even at the Cambrian Combine collieries the outside number of imported men was 50, and the only colliery at which they were employed was the Glamorgan Colliery. This criticism is made in order to show the ill-informed character of some of the reports forwarded to the Home Office at this stage of the struggle. Describing his plans, General Macready wrote :—

His Plan of Action.

"Generally speaking, I propose to hold the various collieries with a minimum of police, a central police support being held ready in each group, while in reserve will be a body of infantry. If the situation remains as at present, a main reserve of cavalry and infantry will be held at Pontypridd, the infantry, if necessary, being conveyed by rail, for which purpose an engine will always be held ready with steam up, a system which has been adopted since the trouble began.

"I must point out, however, that this scheme may, and possibly will, entail great wear and tear on the police, even if the men on guard in the collieries are relieved as often as possible from the local police reserve. If we use infantry to hold outlying collieries they may, of course, at any moment be brought in contact with the mob, but there will be no alternative to this if the police force is too weak to offer effective resistance for some hours at the various outlying posts.

"I submit a distribution of troops and police showing (a) present distribution, (b) the distribution which I suggest with the present numbers, and (c) the distribution to meet the situation when the police force is reduced according to your suggestion. You will, however, notice that I think it might be dangerous, unless events assume a more favourable aspect, to reduce the Metropolitan foot police below 400, as we might, by doing so, risk the premature intervention of the military.

" General Allotment.

Collieries.	A. Present.		B. Proposed— With Present Force.		C. Proposed— With Reduced Forces.*		Distribution of Troops.
	Local.	Metro-politan.	Local.	Metro-politan.	Local.	Metro-politan.	
Cambrian Group	225	473	221	182 ft. 15 mtd.	221	60 ft. 15 mtd.	2 Squadrons 18th Hussars, Pontypridd. 1 Company Lancashire Fusiliers, Llwynypia. 1 Company Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, Aberaman. 1 Company West Riding Regiment, Pontypridd. 1 Company Royal Munster Fusiliers, Newport. 1 Company Devonshire Regiment, Newport.
Aberaman Group	341		92	249 ft. 15 mtd.	92	140 ft. 15 mtd.	
Port Talbot Group	46	80	46	50 ft.	46	20 ft.	
Porth	—	—	—	100 ft.	—	—	
General Reserve : Pontypridd...	—	—	—	203 ft. 20 mtd.	—	80 ft. 20 mtd.	
Totals	271	553 341	359	784 ft. 50 mtd.	359	* 300 ft. 50 mtd.	

" *At this stage, although I have worked my estimate down to the figures mentioned by the Home Secretary, viz., 300 Metropolitan Foot Police and 50 Metropolitan Mounted Police, I consider that another 100 Metropolitan Foot Police are necessary. I should distribute these 50 at Porth and 50 at Pontypridd."

On November 16th the Home Secretary formally approved of these dispositions and informed General Macready that he could " count on a minimum of 400 Metropolitan police if required during the continuance of the dispute."

Cynon Colliery Dispute.

Although the attempt made in the early stages of the strike to embroil the whole of the coalfield in a general stoppage had failed the idea had by no means been abandoned, and while the pioneers of that irregular and illegal movement were nursing their hopes and abiding their opportunity they were rigidly enforcing and constraining the boycott of the collieries It has already been seen to what extent that plan of campaign had been attempted in the Mid-Rhondda and Aberdare districts. Except at the Glamorgan Colliery it had been so far successful in those valleys as to leave no pit with a sufficient number of hands to keep the engines and pumps up to their normal working speed, and by November 13th it had been extended to the Gelli Colliery, Ystrad ; the Cilely Colliery, Tonyrefail ; the Brynmenyn Colliery of the Coytrahen Park Colliery Company, Tondu ; and to the Cynon Colliery in the Avan Valley. At the Cynon Colliery there was a dispute between the management and the workmen as to the carrying out of a legal decision given by the magistrates against the workmen. They had broken their contracts a few weeks previously ; judgment had been given against them ; and the Court had given an order authorising the Company to deduct the fines from the men's wages. This decision they resented ; violence was threatened if the Company made any attempt to enforce the order ; and on November 10th, Col. J. R. Wright, the Chairman of the Company, wrote to the Chief Constable, bringing these facts to his notice, and stating that the Company would, after this notice, hold the authorities of the County of Glamorgan liable for all damage, actual and consequential that may be caused by any such riotous behaviour. The police and military were sent down, and though disturbances took place they were not of a serious character. The incident, however, provoked considerable friction between the management and the police officers, and led to a very sharp correspondence between the South Wales Coalowners' Association and the Home Secretary. The text of the correspondence in the Blue Book is of peculiar interest not only because of the dissertations given in the Home Secretary's letters on the respective duties of employers on the one hand and of

the police and military forces of the other during industrial disorders, but also because of the incursion made in them by Mr. Churchill into the merits of the dispute and into the legality of the magistrates' decision. The correspondence was opened by a simple request on the part of Mr. F. L. Davis, the President of the coalowners' representatives on the Conciliation Board, to see Mr. Churchill with the view to an enquiry concerning an ex parte statement made by Mr. Jacob, the manager of the colliery, concerning the conduct of one of the Metropolitan police officers ; its upshot was a letter from Mr. Dalziel, the Secretary of the Coalowners' Association' stating that "Mr. Davis does not see any advantage to be derived from going further into details, nor from dealing with the several points raised by the Home Secretary, beyond saying that the Home Secretary's observations evade the main question, viz., the absolute necessity for the introduction of the military, the proof of which was furnished by the actual events which occurred at the colliery on the occasion referred to."

Privations of Strikers and Police.

By November 13th the strength of the police in the disturbed districts had been brought to a total of over 1,400, and of the infantry (including the reserves at Newport) to 500 rifles. That of the cavalry had remained at its original strength of two squadrons. The police were suffering great hardships. Many of them were kept on duty without intermission for 30 and more hours, had to take such rest as was practicable under conditions of great discomfort in wet clothes and in unheated sheds devoid of any sort of bedding, and for some days had to put up with insufficient and unsuitable food. As fast as possible the conditions were made more tolerable, but so great did the strain continue that many of the men were over three weeks without a change of clothing. Moreover, they complained that as against rioters using such missiles as stones they were practically unarmed ; their only weapon was the truncheon which they could only use at close quarters—an opportunity that did not occur often after the lesson taught the strikers on the night of November 8th. The privations of the strikers were of a different order. In the mid-Rhondda district the miners received their first strike pay on November 10th. Every workman in benefit received 10/- a week and 1/- per week for every child under 12 years of age. Though this allowance, assisted by the supply of free coal gathered from coal tips or from levels driven into the mountain sides, the supply of free meals to the children, the non-payment of rents and rates, public relief funds, and extended credit from tradesmen, enabled the men to keep their families in tolerable comfort, it left wants unsatisfied ; but in the Aberdare Valley the illegal character of the strike deprived the strikers of any financial claim on the Federation and at the end of three weeks the miners in that district were begging

in the streets for their food. Soup kitchens for the feeding of children were opened on the strength of donations from the local public authorities and of public subscriptions, but for the relief of the distress of the adults processions of beggars were organised, and accompanied by conveyances drawn by strikers these processions marched through Aberdare, Aberaman, Penrhiwceibr, and Mountain Ash. By this means they were able to collect a great quantity of food. The illegal origin of the stoppage and the bitterness with which it had been conducted had alienated the sympathy of a large number of the tradesmen in the district, and in many cases gifts were made more from motives of fear and discretion than from compassion. At a public meeting held at Tonypandy called to consider the question of making an application to the Board of Education for power to put into force the Provision of Meals Act in order to provide for necessitous children an offer of £100 per week made by Mr. Leonard Llewelyn on behalf of the Cambrian Combine for the support of the children was unanimously refused.

These incidental facts throw some light on local conditions of life under the pressure of the strike, on the bitterness with which it was being fought by the miners, and on the strained relationship between the coalowners and the Government, and no story of this grim struggle between the workmen and their employers would be complete which did not contain a reference to them.

CHAPTER IV.

A DIARY OF OUTRAGES.

A Diary of Outrages.—A typical Intimidatory Letter.—Terrorism of Colliery Officials and their Families.—Demand for Revolvers.—Strikers frustrate an attempt to re-light the fires at the Britannic Merthyr Colliery, Gilfach Goch.—Workmen's residences wrecked.—General Macready interviews workmen's representatives in Mid Rhondda and the Aberdare Valley.—A False Alarm.—A train is stoned and a passenger injured.—Strikers hold up a tramcar.—A Colliery Official maltreated.—A Constable is waylaid and robbed of a Despatch Bag.—Chief Constable complains of the abuse of the Trade Disputes Act.—Mr. Moylan, confidential Officer to the Home Secretary, describes picketting practices.—His inaccuracies.—Distressing cases of Intimidation.—Disturbances at Pandy and Ely Pits.—Railway Stations and Signal Cabins stormed.—Trains held up.—Taff Vale Railway Company apply for better protection.—A Sunday evening Chapel incident at Aberaman.—The Penygraig Riots of November 21st.—Fierce and Sustained Street Fighting.—Troops hurriedly ordered up.—Picket Camp fires destroyed.—Questions in Parliament.

A Diary of Outrages.

The events which have been described bring us to the third week of the stoppage in the Rhondda Valley, and to the fifth of strike in the Aberdare district. The story of the incidents of this week may be commenced with the following report of Capt. Lindsay, sent to the Home Office on Monday, November 14th, from Pontypridd :—

"Sir,—Had it not been for our bad luck on the night of Tuesday, 8th inst., I should have been able to give a more satisfactory report of the present state of affairs than I now can.

"If the train bringing the 200 Metropolitan police to Tonypandy had been up to time, the strikers would have been met and crushed in Tonypandy (after being defeated by us at the colliery gate) instead of being encouraged by their success in the streets.

"Briefly the situation is this: If none of the desperate measures said to be contemplated in consequence of the socialistic speeches yesterday take place within the next 48 hours, I think the strike will begin to lessen in area, when I shall be able to send back some of the police. I had hoped to have sent back a few to-day.

"I cannot speak too highly of the splendid assistance given me by General Macready and all the military and police officers and men sent here.

"This strike is totally different to any one that I have previously experienced, and I could not have done without their advice and assistance."

On this same day, viz., November 14th, the Conciliation Board met at Cardiff to consider a demand made by the miners for an advance of 1¼ per cent. in the general wage rate, and at the request of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, to consider the situation in the Aberdare Valley. The general wage rate at this date stood at 50 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879 or 35 per cent. above the 1877 standard. Under the terms of the Agreement of March, 1910, the wage rate was fixed at 50 per cent. f.o.b. above 1879 while prices were fluctuating 14/- and 14/9 per ton large coal. The coalowners' audit for the three months ending September gave an average selling price of 14/10.07, and on the strength of this increased price the demand of the workmen was conceded without the intervention of the independent chairman (Lord St. Aldwyn).

On the day of this concession comparative peace prevailed in the disturbed districts, but that improvement was due more to the enforced restraint exercised by the strong arm of the law than to any real lessening of the bitter hostility of the strikers towards the owners of the collieries and those workmen who, either as imported labourers or as officials, were assisting the owners in their determination to prevent the flooding of the mines and the destruction of the underground workings. If not in open conflict with the police and the military they were exceedingly active in guerilla tactics. The picket watch on the residences of colliery officials and on all the approaches to the collieries was not only organised with wonderful precision but ruthlessly enforced. The following is a copy of a typical intimidatory letter :—

"To —— This is a warning to you, that if you do not cease work at once and throw in your lot with us we will stone the house and loot all that you have. Warning ; leave at once.—(Signed) Strikers fighting for the cause of the children."

The following are some of the incidents reported during the period now under review—

Monday, November 14th.

Some of the officials who had received threatening letters waited on Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, the general manager of the Combine collieries, and represented to him that, while they were prepared themselves to run all risks of the threats they had received, they were

anxious about the safety of their families. While they were at work, they urged their wives and children had to remain indoors all day under lock and key, and were often driven into a state of terror by the menaces of the strikers. Mr. Llewelyn replied that he was prepared to compensate the officials for any damage done to their houses, and that if they thought it necessary to remove their wives and families to a place of safety he would bear the cost while they were away.

Supt. T. Cole, Deputy Chief Constable, reports to the Chief Constable:—Great demand for revolvers and any firearms at Tonypandy. Mandril handles sold at double the usual price. Over 100 applications for revolvers have been made between November 4th and November 12th to one tradesman in Tonypandy, and 18 to another tradesmen in the same town, none of which were supplied, the aplicants failing to produce the necessary gun licenses. During the same period 7 revolvers were sold to men holding licenses.

At Penygraig a fireman employed at the Pandy pit of the Naval Colliery Company was set upon by a body of strikers while on his way home from work. The pickets tried to extract a promise from him that he would not return, but he refused. The timely arrival of a force of Metropolitan police saved him from the violence of his assailants.

Tuesday, November 15th.

At Gilfach Goch an attempt to re-light the furnaces at the Britannic Merthyn Colliery was frustrated by the strikers. No outside labour had been imported at these pits, but early this morning a few officials, eager to minimise the damage which was already being done by water, volunteered to fire the boilers. They succeeded, and were able to raise sufficient steam to put the pumping and ventilating plant in motion. Very soon, however, after the smoke had been observed issuing from the chimney a large crowd gradually gathered together and sent a deputation to the manager with a request that work should immediately cease. Mr. Bowen declined to comply with that request, but the menaces of the crowd, their conduct in throwing stones down the smoke stack, and the inadequacy of the police force defending the colliery eventually induced him to abandon his intention to keep the fires alight, and the pumps were once again brought to a standstill. Twenty constables and an officer's cavalry patrol were despatched to the scene, but did not arrive till after the fires had been extinguished.

At Clydach Vale and Llwynypia, as well as at Aberaman, a number of firemen and other colliery officials were molested by bands of pickets, and served with warnings, signed "The Strikers," that their houses would be wrecked if they continued at work.

At the Cynon Colliery the workmen came to terms with the management and returned to work.

At 11 a.m. the mine authorities at the Coytrahen Colliery telephoned to the military quarters warning them that if the 30 Metropolitan police there on duty were removed as was intended the men would wreck the colliery, and that crowds of strikers had surrounded it during the night. On the report of Lieut. Neame, 18th Hussars, 20 of the Metropolitans were detained at the Colliery.

General Macready reports to the Home Office rumours that the strikers were manufacturing bombs by packing four or five explosive cartridges in tobacco boxes with a fuse attached, and warns the mine managers that live wires for the protection of colliery property is illegal.

General Macready reports as follows to the Home Secretary on an interview with the local leaders in the Cambrian strike :—

> "Went to the Thistle Hotel, Tonypandy, and met eleven of the men's representatives of the Cambrian Committee. Mr. Thomas, Stipendiary Magistrate, Mr. Moylan, and Captain Childs accompanied me. Explained to the men that I wished to make their acquaintance in order to discuss the present state of affairs from the point of view of protection of life and property, and that, although I did not believe many of the rumours which had been circulated in the district of late, I had in the last few days heard a great deal about the purchase of revolvers and the preparation of bombs made out of boxes filled with explosives and fired by a fuse. Explained that, although I could not believe that any of the strikers would be so foolish and un-British as to embark on such action, it was well that they should understand precisely what would be the result of such action on the part of any of their followers. At the present time the military were in the district to be called upon to support, if necessary, the civil police, but, if anything in the shape of revolver shooting or bomb throwing were attempted, it was certain that the military would be obliged to intervene at once, the result of which could only be disastrous to the strikers. They assured me that it was not their intention to resort to acts of violence, and that they had strongly urged their followers to abstain therefrom and they would continue to do so in future. They were, however, not prepared to say they had absolute control over their followers. They were of opinion that the theft of explosives reported by the newspapers was merely a clever journalistic move on the owners' side, and were convinced that explosives had not been taken by any of the strikers. I then asked them if they had any complaints

they wished to bring to my notice. One man then described what they claimed to be an assault upon their picket by the police at Clydach Vale. He said that the day before yesterday, about dawn, he and about 15 men were on picket a few hundred yards from the colliery entrance; a mine official came along to his work, they questioned him and allowed him to pass on. Presently the sergeant on duty asked what they were doing; they said they were picketing the mine; he said 'I will soon shove you out of that,' and got together a body of 20 constables and hustled them away. My informant was a man in charge of a picket. He also told me that Deputy Chief Constable Cole apologised to him afterwards for the action the police had taken in the matter.

"We then discussed the question of the police escorting 'blacklegs,' and the representatives claimed that the police did not act in accordance with the law and did not allow the pickets to interview men passsing to and from their work. I asked whether, when pickets were interviewing 'blacklegs,' the constable escorting the 'blacklegs' could hear what passed between them and the pickets? They objected strongly to this and claimed that the law entitled the pickets to converse with 'blacklegs' privately. I pointed out that in the case of a single 'blackleg' there would be no evidence of intimidation. On discussing the question of keeping the mines working and the horses underground, one of the men who spoke seemed inclined to allow a minimum of workmen to be employed for this purpose, and they thought that about forty should be sufficient. Another representative said that there were no reasons for keeping the horses below, and that it was simply a trick to excite public sympathy. They claimed that their wives and children stood in the same relation to them as the horses did to the Company. The same speaker said that if they could not get their terms their object was to let the mines be flooded to the top. Having explained that as an official I was quite unbiassed as to the rights of either party, I asked them to inform me at once whether they had any grievance against the police or military, and told them that the more information of a reliable nature they could give me the more it would possibly tend towards avoiding friction during the present crisis. They promised they would do so and we parted on friendly terms.

"A football match between the strikers and the soldiers was played at Tonypandy in which the soldiers were victorious."

Wednesday, November 16th.

The Home Secretary sent the following message to General Macready:—

"You should remember that the owners are within their legal rights in claiming to import labour, but that you are entitled to judge the time, manner and circumstances of such importation in order that no breach of the peace may be unnecessarily provoked, and to ensure that the authorities responsible for keeping order have adequate forces upon the spot. With this leverage you ought to be able to restrain or, at any rate, delay injudicious action on the part of owners. I have no power to veto importation: but if you tell me in any particular case that it cannot be safely done I shall support you. I have full confidence in your judgment and impartiality, and much can be done in these matters by personal influence. Remember, however, that we are bound by the civil law, and that we have no power to remove objectionable persons from the strike area. Atkinson, Mines Inspector, has been told to assist you in any way. Debate in Parliament yesterday was very cool and lifeless, and general impression was that the right thing was being done. You should note my pledge that peaceful picketing will be protected. This, however, does not include trespass, which may be dealt with by the mine owners, but not by the police, unless it leads or is likely to lead to disorder. Pray consult me on any points which cause you embarrassment.—Churchill."

In the Rhondda Valley three meetings of the men were held during the day, and they are reported to have decided that their present strike tactics were a failure, and that the best course was to arrange with the men of the Aberdare Valley to call a conference of men's representatives from the whole of the South Wales Coalfield and endeavour to bring about a general strike.

A company of infantry, under the command of Major Freeth, while being route-marched to Gilfach Goch, are mistaken by the mine management for "a body of 400 armed strikers," and 40 police despatched to the scene in response to a call for assistance arrive "breathlessly on the top of a steep slope to find that the armed strikers were the Lancashire Fusiliers taking their walk!" The mine manager suggests that the colliery might be protected by a line of sentries on the hill tops, but the suggestion is reported to the Home Office with ridicule.

General Macready reports as follows on an interview with the strike leaders in the Aberdare Valley:—

"At 6 p.m. I interviewed Mr. Stanton and ten representatives of the Aberdare Strike Committee. I was accompanied by Sir Marchant Williams, Captain Farquhar, Captain Bridges and Mr. Moylan. I told the Committee that I had inter-

viewed the strike leaders of the Cambrian Group the previous day, and wished to see them in order to make their acquaintance and to impress upon them the exact position of the military in the district, and that the military were here not as a police force, but as a last resource to preserve law and order should the police forces now in the district be unequal to the task. I told them that I did not believe any of the reports lately published in the Press as to the use of explosives and firearms by the strikers, but it was my duty to point out to them that any such action on the part of their followers would entirely change the whole situation and at once bring the military into active operation. They assured me that they had no intention of using any violence, and Mr. Stanton said that he had formed his 'fighting brigade' in order to protect his people from unprovoked assault on the part of the police. I asked them to assist me by at once informing me of any acts on the part of the police which they considered unprovoked or illegal. I told them that the Chief Constable had impressed on the men under his command the supreme importance of adhering strictly to the law, and of conducting themselves so as to cause no irritation to the populace. The Committee mentioned one or two cases where they considered the police had been to blame, but these were unimportant and easily disposed of. They said that at first the Metropolitan Police were strange to the customs of the district, but now they had nothing to complain of against them. They then referred to the live wire that had been fixed round the power station. I told them that directly it came to my notice I consulted a legal adviser, and had informed the mine manager that such things were illegal and must be at once discontinued, and that I was satisfied that there had been nothing of the sort in the district during the past week. I also strongly impressed on them that there must be a certain amount of give and take both on their part and on ours for acts which might be committed either by isolated strikers or by over-zealous policemen who could not at the moment be controlled either by their leaders or by the officers of the police. Mr. Stanton and the men's representatives were quite friendly and seemed to be glad that I had taken them into my confidence."

Thursday, November 17th.

While passing between Mountain Ash and Abercwmboi the Taff Vale Railway 8.43 p.m. passenger train was stoned, and a passenger's eye was pierced by a piece of broken glass.

The police reported that at 10.40 the previous night a tramcar, in which the chief clerk of the Naval Colliery was travelling home, was held up by a crowd of strikers, and that the official was compelled to leave the car and return to the colliery for the night.

At 8.30 a large crowd of strikers demonstrated outside the residences of four Colliery officials living at Sherwood-terrace, Llwynypia, and wrecked the windows and some furniture.

Friday, November 18th.

At Penygraig a party of pickets attacked the house of the Ely Pit manager, who at the time was attending to his duties at the colliery. Every window in the house was smashed, and stones thrown into the building damaged some furniture and pictures.

An electric tramcar proceeding to Dinas was held up by a body of strikers, and some colliery officials, who were on their way to a meeting to discuss the question of resuming work, were compelled to leave the car and retrace their steps home.

A Clydach Vale fireman was waylaid in the early hours of the morning while on his way to work, and struck senseless to the ground. No arrests were made, but in the dispersal of the strikers the police drew their staves.

A constable conveying letters and parcels in a bag from the police headquarters at Tonypandy to the County police offices at Pontypridd was attacked by strikers while travelling in a tramcar and robbed of his bag.

While picketting on the Taff Vale Railway line at Tonypandy a striker named Walby was knocked down by a train and his injuries necessitated the amputation of one of his feet.

The Chief Constable addressed the following report to the Home Secretary :—

> "Sir,—I regret to say that the strikers are taking advantage of the Trade Disputes Act, 1906, to assemble in localities too numerous to be properly supervised by the police, for the purpose of committing acts of lawlessness, whenever there are not sufficient police to prevent them, or local police to recognise them.
>
> "In several cases, officials have been maltreated, example :—An official at Penygraig, who wished to leave the district, and take no part in the strike, had to be escorted to the station by a force of Metropolitan police, to save him from violence.
>
> "This conduct is the more reprehensible since the General and his staff are continually moving about through the strike area, interviewing the men's leaders, explaining the law on the subject, and obtaining from them promises that no illegal act shall be performed."

Mr. Moylan also reports to the Home Secretary :—

> "The chief trouble, however, has been in connection with picketing and demonstrations against the persons and

property of officials and 'blacklegs.' The position as regards picketing is a difficult one. The pickets are out on the streets and public places all day in great numbers, and they work in four-hour reliefs. They are most active in the early morning when they hope to catch men going to work, and it is undoubted that in many instances they go far beyond the legal limits of peaceful persuasion. Threats are used and in many cases the man picketted is turned back and physical force is used to prevent him from going to work. If the pickets approach a man during the day a crowd at once gathers, and picketting turns into mobbing. More serious still are assaults on officials and blacklegs and their families and attacks on their houses. Cases of assault are so far not numerous, but window smashing is becoming common. The procedure is for a crowd largely composed of women and children to gather round the official's house and stone it. The men in the crowd usually stand by and look on. Most of the houses attacked are empty, the occupants sleeping at the colliery at which they are working and their families having removed to relatives houses or out of the district. In a number of cases the colliery owners are paying the expenses incurred in the removal and maintenance of an official's or blackleg's family elsewhere. Last night or early this morning an empty house was entered and all the furniture smashed. During the last two days a new plan of painting 'B' or 'Bl' or 'Scab' on a blackleg's house has been adopted. There is not much harm in this itself, but it obviously invites the attention of stone-throwers. It is in many ways more difficult for the police to deal with intimidation and attacks on scattered individuals and houses than with the riots of last week."

(Note—"Mr. Moylan is inaccurate when he speaks of the houses of "blacklegs." No blackleg, i.e., an imported labourer, was housed outside the Llwynypia Colliery. That was the only colliery, too, at which imported workmen were employed during the whole period of the strike. The men picketted were regular servants of the Company and every house attacked was that of a permanent workman.")

Saturday, November 19th.

The strikers broke into the residence of a workman who had sent his family out of the district, rifled the cupboards and drawers, removed some of the furniture into the street, and made a bonfire of a grandfather's clock in the town square.

In another similar case, all the bed-clothes were thrown into the street, and burnt before the eyes of the distressed wife of an official who at the time was attending to his duties at one of the collieries.

The Home Secretary telegraphs to the Chief Constable :—

"Your letter of the 18th ; you are quite right to act vigorously against serious disorder. A certain amount of friction is, however, inseparable from the present situation. Both sides are unreasonable in many ways, and I should recommend you to go gently in small matters."

(Note.—The Home Secretary, when he speaks of minor friction and small matters, vaguely refers to the picketting of and attacks upon the persons and property of the colliery officials).

General Macready sends the following report to the Home Office:—

"Mr. Llewelyn wrote to the Chief Constable and informed him that, unless more protection was provided at the Britannic Colliery to enable the officials to work the engines, the colliery would be drowned out and the Company would hold the authorities responsible for any damage that might be done to the colliery in consequence of not being provided with adequate protection. I may point out that it is almost impossible to protect this colliery without holding the tops of the hills which surround it, in order to prevent people rolling stones down the mountain sides into the colliery.

"Four members of the Cambrian Committee, Clydach Vale, came to see me at 8.30 p.m. They complained of undue severity on the part of the police in dealing with pickets, and said they had been told that the police were going to shift all the pickets to-night. I told them that such was not the case, and that I had heard of no complaint against the police for interfering with the pickets during the last three days. I pointed out that if they allowed crowds to assemble in the streets the police must do their duty, and again impressed on the Committee that they all must assist us if they wished matters to run smoothly. I spoke to them as to the position of 'officials' in the mines, and they practically admitted that men permanently employed on a fixed wage had not been interfered with in previous strikes. They showed me a picketting badge which was to be worn by all men on picket so that the police would be able to distinguish between pickets and the mob."

(Note.—It will be noted that in the first of these two paragraphs General Macready admits in regard to the protection of the Britannic Merthyr Colliery the absolute necessity of a scheme of defence which when it was suggested by the mine manager on November 16th, was ridiculed in Mr. Moylan's report to the Home Office of that day).

Inspector Letheren, on duty at Penygraig, reports that at 3.30 a.m. he and 10 constables accompanied Mr. Frank Llewelyn, deputy agent, and a number of the colliery officials, from the Pandy to the

Ely Pit, where it was proposed to raise the horses. They were observed by pickets, who alarmed the strikers by blowing whistles, and in Tylyncelyn-road—midway between the two pits—the party were surrounded by an angry mob, who shouted abusive epithets at them and threw stones. With difficulty the pit was reached, the fires were lighted and sufficient steam was raised to lower three or four of the officials down the mine. The horses were removed underground from the Ely to the Pandy Pit, where they were afterwards raised. When the engine driver was in the act of beginning to raise the men from the mine a stone, thrown by one of the mob which was beseiging the mine, crashed through the window of the engine house and the driver took such a fright that he ran in sheer terror out of the building. The officials, however, were successfully raised by another workman and were escorted to the Pandy Pit, where they slept, by an escort of 60 constables. On the way back stones were thrown and two inspectors and seven Metropolitan constables were injured. At 8 o'clock in the evening there was another disturbance ; threats were made to raid the Pandy colliery, and it became necessary to call up the services of 150 police before the crowd could be dispersed. During these disturbances considerable damage was done to the residences of colliery officials who were either actually or were supposed to be at work.

Sunday, November 20th.

The picketting of the railway stations in the Rhondda Valley becomes more rigorous than at any other time during the strike, and the storming of signal-cabins and the holding up of passenger and mineral trains render railway travelling hazardous. Within an hour this morning, on a stretch of railway a mile long between Tonypandy and Llwynypia, a mineral train was held up, a signal-box was stormed, and a signalman was held captive while the wagons were searched for suspected " blacklegs." In his report to the general manager of the Taff Vale Railway Company, Mr. A. Beasley, the signalman on duty in the stormed cabin stated that at 1.45 on Sunday morning a crowd of between 400 and 500 strikers appeared outside the cabin. Two of them entered and informed him that he would have to stop all up trains so that they might be examined, as they were certain that the Company were conveying " blacklegs " on mineral trains. The signalman failed to persuade them otherwise, and they gave him to understand that if he did not comply with their wishes they intended to smash the cabin and everything in it, and that all trains that passed would be stoned. At the time an engine was passing on the up line with three wagons of coal for Treherbert, and stones were thrown at it. The signalman concluded his report with the following statement :—" Things are beginning to look serious, and I think protection will have to be provided, as not a single police officer can be seen here after dark."

One of the Company's drivers also reported that his train was held up by signal at 2 a.m. and afterwards boarded and searched by strikers. The signalman had been compelled to put his signal to danger and to stop all trains. In drawing the attention of the Chief Constable of Glamorgan to these facts, Mr. Beasley informed him that on the previous day picketting parties had insisted upon making their way to the platforms at the Tonypandy, Dinas, and Llwynypia stations, and warned the stationmasters at those stations that if any attempt were made to prevent them reaching the platforms and examining the trains they would bring down sufficient force to overwhelm the place. In no case was there interference by the police. Mr. Beasley also forwarded the Chief Constable an anonymous letter threatening that if what was termed as the practice of taking up blacklegs was not stopped the strikers would proceed to pull up the rails. "It is intolerable," wrote Mr. Beasley, "that such a state of things should be allowed to continue, and I beg formally to call upon you to forthwith to afford us and the public using the railway the protection to which we are entitled from outrages of this character."

Every train passing up the valley was examined and in some cases detained by pickets on the look-out for free labourers, and where such were discovered they were held "in custody" till the first convenient down train and then compelled to return.

In the Aberdare Valley a Sunday evening service at the Saron Welsh Congregational Chapel, Aberaman, was broken up owing to the conduct of members who objected to the presence of a member who had remained at work. Many of the congregation refused to take part in the service and at its close drew a large hostile crowd outside and threatened violence. The caretaker's wife was warned that if she allowed the man to escape through her house it would be wrecked, and it was not till a strong force of foot and mounted police had arrived on the scene that the innocent workman was able to reach his home. On the way stones were thrown, and several of the police, as well as their charge, were struck.

In another case at Aberaman a party of masked pickets broke into a house and searched unsuccessfully for an official who had kept at work; and in a third pickets were surprised in the act of pouring paraffin oil on the door of a colliery official's home.

It is reported that on the previous day a workman's house at Godreaman was partly demolished in consequence of his decision to apply for work in order to relieve the hunger of his wife and children.

About 11.30 p.m. it was reported from the Tonypandy-Penygraig district that a crowd was collecting in response to bugle calls. Reinforcements of police were sent from the Rink, and the crowd split into bodies of about 50, roamed about the streets, followed by the police, and eventually dispersed at 2 a.m., after which all was

quiet. Several windows in Trealaw were broken, but as soon as the police arrived the mob ran away.

The Chief Constable reports to the Home Office: "I fear that whatever the outcome of the conference (unofficial) on Monday the more turbulent spirits may make it a pretext for rioting on Monday night."

Monday, November 21st.

The "Western Mail" publishes a list of 27 outrages in the course of the previous week, and commenting on these facts states:—"A state of anarchy prevails in the Rhondda. Outrages occur every day and there is apparently little effort made to put a stop to them. It is amazing to learn that not a single arrest has been made throughout the whole of this disgraceful terrorism. . . . What are the police doing? Have they received instructions that they are not to interfere even when innocent persons are set upon by the mob? . . The daily outrages which are now a standing feature of the day's news are a disgrace to all concerned—to those who permit them as well as to those who perpetrate them. It is time this lawlessness were stopped."

At a meeting of the strikers held during the morning it was decided to take steps to prevent supplies reaching the troops and the police, and a picket immediately acted on this decision by "capturing" one of the employees of the caterers on his arrival at Llwynypia, forcibly relieving him of a bag he was carrying to one of the constables on duty at the Glamorgan colliery, and accompanying him into the first available train for Cardiff.

Mr. Beasley reports mid-day to the Chief Constable that while the 11.30 train from Treherbert was standing in the Dinas Station a mob of some hundreds of persons forced their way on to the platform with the object of getting at some blacklegs who were supposed to be in the train. They stormed the train and were opening the carriages when the guard gave the signal to the driver, who started the train with between 20 and 30 of the strikers hanging on to the doors. No policeman was at or near the station, and the Company's staff was insufficient to offer effective resistance. Mr. Beasley concluded his letter with a demand "that sufficient protection shall be forthwith afforded the Company and the public using their railway."

An interview takes place at 2.30 at Pontypridd between General Macready, the Chief Constable, Mr. D. A. Thomas, and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, on which General Macready reports to the Home Secretary as follows:—

> "About 2 p.m. Mr. D. A. Thomas, M.P., and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn came to see the Chief Constable, and he brought them to see me. They complained about the inadequacy of protection from the damage which was being done by the strikers. I pointed out to them that it was entirely a

matter of numbers, and if the mines must be strongly held, men are not available constantly to patrol the streets. I particularly mentioned the Britannic and Glamorgan collieries as being calculated to absorb the greatest possible number of defenders with the least possible result. I told them that the right course, in my opinion, was to reduce the strength of the police garrisons, form local and special reserves, and with strong patrols to move rapidly about the district, supports being ready at any moment to proceed to any threatened point. To do this the supports and reserves must be kept up to strength or the men would be worn out. Mr. Llewelyn, when I mentioned the large garrison of the Glamorgan Colliery, said that he personally had no objection, but that, if any of the police were taken away, the men he had working would refuse to stay. I assured them that I would assist by all the means in my power, that I had already taken steps to see if we could not re-start the Britannic, but that everything depended on an adequate police reserve being kept. I told them that in my opinion the policy of giving the strikers as much license as possible, consistent with the preservation of law and order, was the correct one. I agreed, however, that we had reached the limit of this policy, and that should any further trouble arise it would be necessary to take measures strictly to interpret the letter of the law.

"Mr. Llewelyn informed me he was getting in eleven men from Cardiff in order to keep the Glamorgan mine going at Llwynypia."

(Note.—Mr. D. A. Thomas has since stated that his great complaint to General Macready and the Chief Constable was that notwithstanding the daily acts of violence, intimidation, and lawlessness no arrests were being made).

At 2.30 this morning a constable came over from Clydach Vale to Llwynypia to escort a young mechanic to the power station at the Glamorgan Colliery. The youth and the constable had covered a distance of 1½ miles and were within 300 yards of the power house when they were surrounded by a party of armed pickets. When they found who the mechanic was one of the pickets struck him on the head with a blunt instrument, and then ordered the officer to take him back home. The pickets accompanied the couple to Clydach Vale, where they were met by a number of police under the charge of Supt. Williams. This officer found the young mechanic in a dazed and helpless condition and removed him to a local surgery, where the boy's wound was attended to. His condition remained critical for some days afterwards.

THE RIOTS OF NOVEMBER 21st.

At Tonypandy during the night of November 21st the despair of the strikers at their failure to stop the pumping, ventilating and winding machinery at the collieries, and their indignation at the part played by the police in the measures taken for the defence of the collieries led to conflicts between the strikers and the police forces at Tonypandy and Penygraig more sustained, if not also more desperate, than on any other occasion since the beginning of the strike. In the suppression of these riots every available active as well as reserve constable in the Cambrian Combine area between Gelli and Pontypridd was called out. The military were also brought within the danger zone to cope with the contingency of the defeat of the police forces ; but after a very hard struggle the police got the upper hand, and peace was restored after over four hours' fighting without active military support.

The disturbance began outside the Tonypandy (Taff Vale Railway) station. The strikers had been correctly informed that " blacklegs " were to be brought up from Pontypridd by an evening train, and in spite of the representations made by Mr. Beasley the railway stations were inadequately protected, and every train during the afternoon and evening was rigidly searched by pickets at Dinas and Tonypandy. During the afternoon, however, Capt. Lindsay and General Macready completed arrangements for bringing to an end this interference with railway traffic, and these arrangements were put into force with the 8.10 p.m. train from Pontypridd to Llwynypia. The arrangements were that in all trains, including the 8.10 p.m. up Rhondda train that evening, 10 Metropolitan police would travel to and from Llwynypia, and that if they required assistance the engine driver would give three long blasts on his whistle. The last of the trains which the strikers held up was the 8.27 p.m. train at Dinas. They attempted a similar proceeding with the passenger train due at Dinas a few minutes later, but in this train there were some 10 Metropolitan constables under the charge of Inspector Anderson, who surprised the pickets, prevented the raiding, and drove the strikers from the station. At this time the banks of the river near Tonypandy were lined by hundreds of people, while the bridge which crosses the valley between Tonypandy and Trealaw and from which access is obtained to the platform of the railway station was packed with a crowd extending across the bridge to Trealaw at one end to the main street of Tonypandy at the other. The previous two day's incidents at Penygraig, and the repeated disappointments of the pickets in their search for " blacklegs " had greatly inflamed the passions of the strikers, and when the train due at Tonypandy at about 8.30 p.m. made its appearance excitement was at a fever pitch. The booking-office which

stands on the bridge, and which is entered by a single door, was locked and guarded by a small body of police. An attempt was made by the crowd to force its way on to the platform, but it was resisted; the door remained locked; and passengers from the train were detained at the station. The uproar was deafening; a few women who had detrained swooned from fear; while others hid themselves in the railway offices.

At 8.55 Inspector Anderson telephoned to the Tonypandy Skating Rink—the police headquarters—for immediate assistance, and five minutes later a contingent of 25 constables and sergeants under Inspector Grosch and Bole was sent to Dinas, another of 29 men under Inspector Turner to the Tonypandy station, and a third of 27 men under Inspector Diprose to Penygraig. At 9.50 Supt. Powell, Tonypandy, informed Insp. Salter at Pontypridd that all the reserves have been turned out, and that the crowd had threatened to tear up the railway lines and wreck the station and the station-master's house. From that moment the police continued to leave the Rink in response to urgent calls for assistance till the last man had been sent out, and at one time it is stated that there were at least six conflicts in progress simultaneously between the police and the rioters. When the mob on the bridge had been driven from the precincts of the station it withdrew to a position on the hillside and attacked the police with stones. Both on the Tonypandy and Trealaw sides of the valley the land rises rapidly, and clustering at the foot of the hills are many irregularly-formed rows of houses divided by narrow streets. Well acquainted as they were with the topography of the district the rioters, once they had been driven from the station approaches, found no difficulty in securing comparatively safe and commanding positions, and their plans were aided by the cover of a moonless night and slight fog. These advantages they used to the utmost, and aided by women, who carried supplies of stones and other missiles in their aprons, they stoned the constables in the open streets below with terrible fury. Before several of these attacks the police were compelled to retreat temporarily, but courageously returning to their dangerous task they drove the rioters from their warrens, and sent them along Penygraig road in the direction of Penygraig.

At Penygraig the rioting proved of an exceedingly ferocious and sustained character. When the rioters were driven into that town by the Metropolitan police the strength of the local defending force was very small and totally inadequate either for the suppression of the riot or the protection of life and property. Even when the main column of the Metropolitans under the charge of Supts. Powell and Williams had reached Pandy Colliery the local force at Penygraig was only 40, and at 9.50 p.m., General Macready at Pontypridd received an urgent message from Inspector Letheren, the local

officer in charge at Penygraig, reporting the situation very serious and calling for immediate reinforcements. The Chief Constable was at that moment returning from Pontypridd for Llwynypia. On the receipt of Inspector Letheren's message, General Macready immediately despatched 50 Metropolitan police from Pontypridd to Tonypandy, and at the same time telephoned to Major Freeth, who was stationed at Llwynypia, to proceed at once to Penygraig with a strong half company of the Lancashire Fusiliers. At Llwynypia Capt. Lindsay brought together every available constable, drawing his men from the colliery yard as well as from the streets, and with 40 men he marched through Tonypandy. All the way along the route through Tonypandy he passed strong detachments of Metropolitan police guarding the principal cross roads and repelling small attacks. In every case as he approached through the darkness, he heard the order to line out and draw staves to repel an attack. On the return of the train despatched from Pontypridd by General Macready with Metropolitan police it was utilised at 11.30 for the movement to the Naval Pit, Penygraig, of a company of the West Riding Regiment under the command of Capt. Tidmarsh and the last 10 men of the Metropolitan police reserve. At Tonypandy these 10 men were joined by 40 others brought down from the Gelli Colliery. Major Law, at Newport, was also ordered to bring to Pontypridd two companies of infantry (the Royal Munster Fusiliers and the Devonshires) from the reserve at Newport (they arrived at 3 a.m. the following morning), while a squadron of Hussars, under the command of Major Haag, was sent from Pontypridd at 11.15 p.m. to Penygraig by road. The West Riding infantry, on their way to Tonypandy, had to run the gauntlet of a terrific fussilade of stones while passing between Dinas and Tonypandy. When the train reached Dinas the soldiers were told by the police who accompanied them to stand on the seats of the carriages, and it was well they did so, for on approaching the Pandy Colliery of the Naval Company stones, hurled at the train by strikers occupying favourable positions on the coaltips which command the railway, came crashing through the windows of the carriages. Outside the Naval Colliery the soldiers detrained, whereupon the strikers fled, and joined the rioters in the streets of Penygraig. While movements were in progress the handful of police engaged in the conflict in and about the Penygraig Square were in desperate straits. The volleys of stones thrown at the little band from the side streets which run uphill from the square were often so heavy that the constables had to take refuge in doorways. After brief respites they would charge up the hill, dislodge and pursue their assailants, and then retire again to the square. As the police retreated the rioters returned to the positions from which they had been driven ; then there followed another charge by the police, and as the police considered it too dangerous

to follow the rioters far into the side streets these attacks and retreats continued for about an hour.

Describing the course of the riot here Insp. Letheren reported that the situation in the vicinity of the Square became more serious after the arrival at 9.30 of a contingent of 25 Metropolitan police from the direction of the Pandy Pit. Insp. Diprose, who was in command of the contingent, reported that he had been stoned all the way from the pit, and while these two officers, with Inspector Lloyd of the Swansea police and A. S. Thomas (Glamorgan) were in conference near the Square they were attacked by mobs from Amos Hill and Penygraig road. Both were strong positions and were held by bodies of over 300 strikers. Inspector Letheren and the other officers appealed to the rioters not to throw stones, but in vain, and many of the constables were struck. The police took shelter, but with stones and other missiles raining upon them their situation became an untenable one and they determined to charge the crowd occupying Amos Hill. They were met with a fusillade of stones which carried away the helmets of several of the constables and sent P.C. Wilcox senseless to the ground with a very bad scalp wound. Wilcox was carried by some of his comrades into the Swan Hotel, where his injury was attended to. Amos Hill, however, was cleared, but on the return of the police to the Butchers Square they were again stoned from Library Road. They charged this street with batons drawn, and their assailants took refuge in the houses, the doors of which had been left open for the purpose of the shelter of the rioters in the event of an attack by the police. Against the latter, however, the doors in most cases were quickly slammed and bolted, and the constables were then heavily attacked from the bedroom windows. Returning to the Square the little force which had for an hour stood the strain and the injuries of these incessant attacks found the situation worse than ever. Attacked simultaneously from Amos Hill, Library Road, and Penygraig Road they retired in the direction of Hendreafon Road. Noah Morgan and Moses Jenkins, two of the local leaders, appealed to the rioters to disperse and leave the police alone. It was to no good purpose; the stone throwing was maintained unceasingly; and an attempt to cut off the little force was only defeated by a desperate baton charge, in which a number of the rioters, coming for the first time into hand grips with the police, were sent to the ground. At this stage of the conflict a contingent of Metropolitan police arrived at the Square from the direction of Dinas. Imperfectly informed as to the local situation they found themselves in the thick of the danger zone. Stones rained down upon them from Amos Hill; many of them were struck; but escorted by A. S. Thomas they eventually managed after a circuitous route through side streets to join the relieving force at Pandy Pit. The 50

infantry ordered down from Llwynypia were also reported to have arrived at the Pandy Pit, accompanied by a magistrate, and were held back there pending a demand for their services from the Chief Constable. On his arrival at Pandy Pit the Chief Constable had under his immediate control a combined force of over 200 constables. Detailing Supt. Williams and 100 Metropolitans to take charge of Pandy Pit, and directing Insp. Grosch and 50 Metropolitans to work the main road, he moved forward, cleared Butcher's Square, and formed three other parties composed of Cardiff, Swansea, Glamorgan and London Police, and led by local men, to clear the side-streets. For an hour the police and the rioters fought desperately. Though there was an occasional hand to hand conflict the greater part of the fighting by the rioters was done from the shelter of their houses. Ash buckets, stones, chamber and other utensils as well as boiling water were thrown down at the police as they charged past, and among those thus injured were P.C. Knipe, who had a main artery severed; P.C. Waddleton, who was discovered by the Chief Constable lying unconscious in a deserted roadway which had just been charged; P.C. Eversfield, who had his cheek cut open with a pick handle; and P.C. Wiggins, who received a blow from a stone causing concussion of the brain. The rioters were relentlessly pursued till they were driven either into their homes or to the fastnesses of the upper reaches of the mountain. In this pursuit the police were frequently met by cross-fires on the part of women as well as men from the houses of miners and from street corners, but at midnight the Chief Constable had the situation under complete control, and once again the district only just escaped the disgrace of being placed under martial law. When the Chief Constable returned about midnight to the Pandy Pit of the Naval Company, which was near the seat of his operations, he ascertained that the cavalry had just arrived from Pontypridd. Their progress had been delayed by the frosty state of the roads. The West Riding infantry also arrived at the Pandy Pit when the disturbance was practically over. Some sniping continued into the early hours of the morning, and Sergeant Smith and 30 police quelled a row at Trealaw, but there was no further serious trouble and after the cavalry had patrolled the district they returned to Pontypridd. The West Riding company remained at the Pandy Pit, but the Lancashire Fusiliers, under the command of Major Freeth, returned to Llwynypia by a circular direction on the opposite side of the valley, accompanied by a detachment of the Metropolitan police. On their way they dispersed all the pickets, and destroyed the picket camp fires. Most of the police engaged in the suppression of the riot were struck with stones or some other missile, and the official list of casualties gave a total of 50 more or less seriously injured.

Of the injured among the rioters it is extremely difficult to give even an approximate idea. Many of them, particularly in the close fighting at Penygraig, were bludgeoned, but the strikers rarely came into close quarters with the police. They occupied positions on the hillside from which they could safely stone the police, and, when the police charged, quickly took to their heels ; but occasionally they were surprised with flank surprise attacks by small bodies of police and then suffered heavily. Still, the proportion of injured among them was nothing like as heavy as it was at Llwynypia on November 8th. Owing to the risks of the situation only three arrests were made, and in only one of these was there a conviction. The "blacklegs" obtained by Mr. Llewelyn from Cardiff were to have been sent into the Glamorgan Colliery by special train at midnight, but were stopped at Pontypridd.

Reporting on these occurrences to the Home Office the Chief Constable wrote :—

> "Up till the moment on Monday night, when the strikers assumed the aggressive, it had been extremely difficult for the police to deal with the situation. The streets were at all times crowded with strikers, sympathisers with them, and persons who did not dare to shew any disfavour towards them.
>
> "The railway officials were most tardy in complaining of illegal acts, and did not like to call upon the police to clear their platforms of the pickets and their sympathisers.
>
> "The only two alternatives for the police were either to wait until the strikers assumed the aggressive, or to bring on a collision themselves. The strikers were perfectly aware of this, and shaped their tactics accordingly
>
> "I consider, when the inevitable collision occurred on Monday night, the situation was dealt with in a highly satisfactory manner. . . . .
>
> "The brunt of the fighting fell on Superintendents Powell and Williams and the main force of the Metropolitan police. The well-timed arrival of reinforcements of all kinds, and the disposition of the latter, must, however, have created an excellent moral effect, first, as to the value of the Metropolitan police, and, second, as to the action of the military.
>
> "I have, Sir, as you are well aware, fully shared your great anxiety as to the result of any action by the military, but now I am thoroughly re-assured on this point, and feel sure that the very careful study of the situation by General Macready and all his officers will enable them to give us the very best possible help from a moral point of view at all times, that nothing rash or risky will ever be attempted,

and should the worst come to the worst they will completely save the situation in such a manner as will call for no possible censure on any one's shoulders.

"In no previous strike in which I have had military assistance have the officers made such a careful and serious study of the situation."

Tuesday, November 22nd.

At 3 o'clock this morning 100 men of the Devon Regiment, 100 of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, and 50 of the Royal Army Medical Corps proceed from Newport to Pontypridd under Major Law.

The following telegram was received by General Macready from the Home Secretary :—

"Arrest and prosecution should follow in all cases where evidence is forthcoming against law-breakers. Cases of intimidation clearly going beyond peaceful persuasion, even if they cannot be prevented at the time, should be investigated afterwards with a view to the conviction of the offenders. The police should not hesitate to make arrests where *prima facie* case is disclosed, and after every incident of disorder police inquiries and detective work should be rigorously prosecuted. This does not mean that pickets should be hustled or the police force be dissipated and exhausted in futile efforts, and must not be thought in conflict with my general advice to the Chief Constable to go gently in small things. Behind the day-to-day maintenance of order, which is a matter of judgment and tact, there must be a regular process of bringing offenders, particularly rioters and thieves, to justice. Please impart this to the Chief Constable and take it as a general guide, subject always to your superior knowledge on the spot.—Churchill."

At Aberaman at night serious rioting took place. The railway station was stormed by a huge crowd engaged in the pursuit of a colliery craftsman, who was captured in the waiting room, and severely maltreated, while the foot and mounted police were attacked with stones and many of them struck. The disturbance was suppressed by a series of baton charges, but the streets were not cleared till after midnight. House property was badly damaged, and a large number of civilians and 14 police were seriously injured. The disturbance continued from 6 to 11 p.m.

Replying in Parliament, the Home Secretary said that the officers who had made enquiries into the theft of explosives were satisfied that the perpetrators were common thieves and that the incident had no connection with the strike. He also added that the use of wires charged with electric current to exclude persons from

the mine premises was illegal, and that the mine managers had been warned that nothing of that sort would be permitted.

Replying to Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Haldane, the Secretary of State for War, said that the searchlight erected by the military authorities at Aberaman (and Llwynypia) were authorised by him under Paragraph 14 (a) King's Regulations, and Paragraph 5 Equipment Regulations, part 1. . . . The military, if properly requisitioned should use such force, and no more force, than is necessary to enable the civil force to cope with riot and disorder. . . . My impression is that the officer commanding would have been guilty of a demeanour at common law if he had not taken all up-to-date steps necessary for his own defence.

Replying to Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Winston Churchill stated that in the Tonypandy district 15 police constables were so severely injured in the disturbances that they had to be relieved from duty and sent home to Cardiff and elsewhere. Forty other constables were less severely injured, and were relieved from active duty for a time. In the Aberaman district six constables were injured and relieved from active duty. In addition to these thirty other Metropolitan constables were injured, some severely, in Monday night's rioting, as well as a considerable number among the local police.

Replying to Earl Winterton, the Home Secretary said he had telegraphed to the Chief Constable urging him to take active measures to bring the offenders to justice, particularly the thieves and rioters, and also persons guilty of intimidation.

In the House of Commons the Home Secretary, while prepared to enquire into any specific case of alleged brutality by the police refused, as he did on Tuesday, November 15th, to order a general enquiry into the conduct of the police during the riots.

Wednesday, November 23rd.

The police are instructed that any prisoners arrested during the riots may be handed over handcuffed to the military if present and police are unable to detain them.

At Pontypridd Police Court, before Mr. Lleufer Thomas, the Stipendiary magistrate, two men were were prosecuted for rioting at Penygraig. In the possession of one prisoner was found a six-chambered revolver loaded with blank cartridges, but the prosecution failed to substantiate the charges, and the two men were discharged.

In the mid-Rhondda district the strikers decided to suspend picketing methods, and the comparative peace of the previous day was maintained ; in the Aberdare Valley a mass meeting approved the decision of the unofficial conference, and recommended the continuance of " peaceful picketing " ; a furniture van, employed in the removal of the furniture of an official at work, was attacked

by a mob of strikers on the high road in broad daylight, and its contents were left on the roadside.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Churchill, replying to questions stated that he certainly proposed to charge the whole cost of the extra police on the county of Glamorgan, and that no facts had been brought to his notice which showed any need of an enquiry.

CHAPTER V

LAST PHASES OF VIOLENCE.

Gilfach Goch Colliery under Arms.—The Employment of Military.—Fundamental change in the attitude of Home Office.—The reasons for it.—Brutal Intimidation.—Its Police Court Sequel.—Strikers' March to Pontypridd.—The Court House Besieged.—Stipendiary Magistrate censures the Conduct of the Strikers.—Convictions and Heavy Penalties in the first Intimidation Case.—What a Disguised Police Officer Heard.—M.F.G.B. Leaders Insulted—The March Riots.—Tampering of Telephone Wires and betrayal of private Police Messages.—Temporary cessation of Violence.—The May "White-shirt" Disorders.—A Police Squad in a tight corner.—The Last of the Riots.—Infantry Demonstrations.—Departure of the Military.

After the great riot of November 21st the disturbances became less and less both in their number and their gravity, and for this reason the diary of events may here be brought to an end, and the story of the strike incidents continued in general narrative form. At this stage of the struggle the influences working for peace were very active, but while they sobered somewhat the conduct of the strikers, they did not lead to a complete suspension of hostilities, and sporadic acts of violence and intimidation continued to be reported from different parts of the disaffected districts. On November 25th, under the protection of a body of from 50 to 60 police, 100 men and four officers of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, a half company of the Lancashire Fusiliers, a half company of the West Riding Regiment, and five troops of cavalry, and in the presence of a magistrate with the Riot Act in his pocket, the fires at the Gilfach Goch Colliery were lighted by 18 colliery officials and the machinery was set in motion. The operations which led to the concentration of these troops at the Britannic Merthyr Colliery were carried through with great secrecy, and the possession of the place by the military came as a great surprise to the strikers. The previous day the strikers had decided to suspend picketing, but when, in response to bugle calls, they crowded into the streets on the morning of the 25th and realised what had occurred, they protested vigorously against the lighting of the fires by colliery officials, and in an interview with Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, who was in charge of the colliery operations, asked that the operations might be delayed for two days till they had consulted the Cambrian Combine Strike Committee. Mr. Llewelyn refused to agree to even an hour's delay

Gilfach Goch under Arms.

and the work went on without any further demonstration. The Royal Munster Fusiliers and the police protected the colliery, and the other troops held the hill-tops from which Clydach Vale and Penygraig as well as Gilfach Goch collieries are commanded. The cavalry returned to Pontypridd in the afternoon and the Lancashire and the West Riding Infantry to Llwynypia and Penygraig, but the Munster Fusiliers and 50 Metropolitan police were detained for the protection of the colliery, while the hill-tops overlooking the two valleys were held by a picquet.

The facts of this case do not make pleasant reading to the Home Office and its representatives in the strike district. They throw a very disagreeable light on the kind of attitude adopted towards the colliery managers and the colliery owners ; and it is interesting to show how, when the reasonable suggestions of a mine manager had first been scorned, the logic of events ultimately compelled the Home Office and military authorities to change their minds and their tactics. On November 15th, when an attempt to light the fires at this colliery was abandoned owing to the intimidation exercised by a large crowd of strikers, Mr. Llewelyn suggested that the hill dividing the Naval and the Britannic Merthyr Collieries might usefully be defended by an infantry patrol. The suggestion apparently received no favourable consideration from General Macready, and was reported to the Home Secretary by Mr. Moylan in the following careless if not offensive terms :—" This same manager [who, Mr. Moylan complained, had asked unnecessarily for police assistance in another case] asked if he could have a line of sentries on the hill tops ! The General and the Chief Constable have given instructions that if any mine manager wants police reinforcements he must satisfy the police officer in charge, and send his requisition through him." The note of exclamation is Mr. Moylan's. On November 18th, Mr. Llewelyn again draws the attention of the Chief Constable to the serious condition of the colliery. " Unless," he wrote, " more protection is afforded to enable the officials to work the engines the colliery will be drowned out, and the Company will hold the authorities responsible for any damage that may be done to the colliery in consequence of its not being provided with adequate protection." General Macready as the result of this letter reports to the Home Secretary :—" I may point out that it is impossible to protect this colliery without holding the tops of the hills which surround it in order to prevent people rolling stones down the mountain sides into the colliery." Here the manager's suggestion of November 15th—at that time reported by Mr. Moylan with a note of exclamation—is admitted to be not only necessary but inevitable. No action, however, is taken except by way of further enquiry, and on November 21st General Macready again reports on the subject to the Home Secretary in the following terms :—

"Major Freeth and Lieutenant Anderson visited the Britannic Colliery and rendered reports as to its condition. It is evident that this mine is being drowned out and it is important that it should be started. It is very hard to defend, and the men in the vicinity are a very rough lot: 50 police and 50 infantry at least would be required for its protection and the place would have to be constantly watched. I informed Mr. Llewelyn and the Chief Constable that I was prepared to offer assistance in re-opening the colliery if the Chief Constable could find the necessary police."

On November 24th plans were made for the opening of the colliery under military protection, and on the following day, as has already been seen, measures were adopted which, when suggested by the mine manager ten days' earlier, were either ignored or laughed at.

The distribution of the troops on this date was as follows :—

18th Hussars.		
	5 troops	Pontypridd.
	2 ,, ...	Porth.
	1 ,, ...	Aberaman.
Devons.		
	1 Company... ...	Pontypridd.
Lancashire Fusiliers.		
	1 Company... ...	Llwynypia.
Loyal North Lancashires.		
	1 Company... ...	Aberaman.
	1 ,, ...	Newport.
West Ridings.		
	Half Company ...	Aberaman.
	Half ,, ...	Porth.
Royal Munsters.		
	1 Company... ...	Gilfach Goch (Britannic Colliery).
Details A.S.C. and R.A.M.C.		Pontypridd.

Brutal Intimidation.

On the night of November 25th a police sergeant is alleged to have assaulted a colliery repairer at Gilfach Goch, but the incident, though it excited a great deal of bad feeling locally, and led to the smashing of the windows of the officer's residence, was not investigated in a court of law at the time. Next day the workmen employed at the Britannic Merthyr Colliery decided to refuse permission to colliery officials to work the boilers and the pumps and warned the police and the mine manager that if they imported "blacklegs" to work the boilers and the engines they would have to put up with the consequences. That same day the windows of the

houses of two colliery officials were broken, and a party of contractor's men, engaged to erect a hut for the accommodation of the sentry picquet, were attacked by the strikers. Two of them were struck with stones and the whole party was compelled to return to Cardiff with their work undone. On November 29th there occurred a still more serious intimidatory outrage, of which the facts, as stated in the Government Blue Book, were as follows :—

> "One of the officials of the Britannic Colliery was, at an early hour in the morning, sent into the Old Dinas main level by an old horse way (the entrance to which is about half a mile from the power house at the pit head), to work his way underground to a pump at the bottom of one of the shafts and put the pump in working order. As nothing more had been heard of him at the end of three hours, fears were entertained that he had succumbed to black damp, and Mr. Price, the acting manager, and Mr. Gould, one of the officials, went in search of him. They had to proceed overground and, applying for a police escort, were accompanied by a sergeant and three constables. On their way some of the strikers detected them, and after they had entered the mine a large crowd collected on the tips near by. The sergeant sent for an inspector and four more constables and, after the lapse of an hour, Mr. Price and Mr. Gould emerged, and these nine policemen proceeded to escort them back to the pithead. The crowd followed and when Mr. Price and Mr. Gould were quite close to their destination, on open and level ground, rushed at them and completely surrounded the police. Several members of the crowd assaulted Mr. Gould, and one knocked him down. The police were in a very difficult position as they were quite unable to clear a passage and Mr. Gould's assailants were too numerous to cope with. To save the situation, Mr. Gould promised that, if they desisted, he would proceed home and abandon his work at the colliery. The crowd eventually accepted this promise and allowed Mr. Gould to be escorted over the mountain to Tonypandy by police. Mr. Price had meanwhile escaped from the crowd and reached the pithead within an area guarded by Metropolitan police, while the under manager, whom they had found safe, waited inside the mine until the crowd had been drawn by Messrs. Price and Gould and then made off home."

On November 28th picketing was also resumed at the other collieries, but not on the scale it had been previously practised, and at Porth, on December 1st, Mr. D. Watts Morgan gave Mr. Lleufer

Thomas, the Stipendiary magistrate, an undertaking that the Act of 1906 with regard to picketing would be strictly adhered to. On December 5th the strikers themselves went even further than this by adopting, on the recommendation of the Joint Strike Committee, a resolution permitting a resumption of work by colliery officials. These measures led to a great diminution in crime, and the strike district became so tranquil as to lead to the withdrawal of a large number of the Metropolitan police ; but friction between the Strike Committee and the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation on matters of general policy, the utter collapse of the general strike movement, the complete failure of the Aberdare Valley strike, and the prosecution of strikers for assault and intimidation fanned once again into flame the smouldering embers of discontent.

Its Sequel.

At Porth, on December 8th, P. S. Thomas, Penygraig, was charged with an assault on D. W. Griffiths and Henry Griffiths, 41, Bank Street, Penygraig, on the night of November 21st. The officer was alleged to have burst open the door of the house, and to have beaten the complainants with his truncheon ; but it was proved that he at any rate was not the officer who had committed the alleged assault. On December 20th, before Mr. Lleufer Thomas, the following convictions took place for the assault and intimidation of William Gould, assistant manager at the Britannic Merthyr Cilliery, Gilfach Goch, on November 29th :—

Two assailants were each sentenced to 6 weeks' imprisonment for violence and 6 weeks each for intimidation—the sentences to run concurrently.

One assailant was fined £20 or one month's imprisonment for violence and was bound over for 12 months in the sum of £20 on a charge of intimidation.

Two other men were each fined £15 or three months' imprisonment for intimidation, and a third person was bound over in the sum of £20 to keep the peace for six months.

Six other persons were acquitted. The hearing occupied six days, during which the precincts of the court were beseiged by mid-Rhondda strikers with the obvious intention of influencing the magistrates. These men each day, to the number of from 7,000 to 8,000, marched from the strike area to Pontypridd—a distance of 7 miles—and shouted and booed outside the court-house. Their conduct was strongly censured from the Bench by the Stipendiary magistrate, but without any good effect, and on the last day of the trial the threats of the mob to resist with violence the conviction of the accused necessitated the protection of the court-house by a strong force of cavalry and infantry as well as police. Mr. D. Watts Morgan, by meeting and informing a large procession at

Penygraig of these special military and police precautions, deterred a large number of the strikers from continuing their journey, and for this reason the crowd at Pontypridd was not so large as it had been on the previous days of the hearing. The two men sent to prison were secretly removed by way of the St. Catherine's Church grounds to the Pontypridd goods station, where a special train was held in readiness and conveyed them to Cardiff, while the mob were awaiting their appearance in a prison van at the main entrance. Up to mid-day on the day of sentence Pontypridd had the appearance of an armed town, and there is no doubt that it was the presence in strength of the troops which restrained riotous proceedings when the strikers learnt that the accused had been sent to prison and that they themselves had been successfully hoodwinked. On January 9th, on the recommendation of the Stipendiary magistrate, the uncompleted portion of a sentence of three months' imprisonment on a miner for assaulting the police on November 21st, was remitted ; but the Home Office, when, through Mr. W. Brace, M.P., appealed to for a remission of the sentences passed in the Gould case, replied that the Secretary of State "regrets that he can find no sufficient ground to justify him consistently with his public duty in advising His Majesty to interfere in this case."

What a Disguised Officer heard.

On Wednesday, December 28th, a leading member of the Workmen's Committee attended a private meeting of the Glamorgan Colliery officials and the following are some of the statements made by him in the course of his speech :—"The Combine Committee consider the officials who are at work a body of blacklegs ; we, the Combine Committee, have passed a resolution to the effect that if the officials do not discontinue doing other people's work we will use every means to stop them going to work ; I will do all I can to raise the feeling of the men to a higher state of bitterness than before and the hostilities will be more severe than ever ; batons or cracked skulls shall not stop us ; we are holding meetings this week and the result will be that we shall take united action to keep all persons from the collieries. General Macready has been at our meeting to-day and said that he would use his influence with the Home Secretary to get the sentences on the men convicted for intimidation at Gilfach reduced if the Combine Committee would allow the men to go to the Gilfach Goch mine, and we definitely refused that permission." These statements, which were reported by a disguised officer and communicated to the local police authorities as well as to General Macready, reveal the mind and temper of the Strike Committee at the end of December, and on January 11th they took effect by the issue of an order authorising the resumption of picketing against all colliery officials who were

performing other than their ordinary duties at the collieries, and the passing of a resolution to the effect that "should any picket commit an offence, the remainder will stand by him so that one should not suffer alone." The Combine Committee however, by this time, had been taught that intimidation could not be prosecuted with the impunity it was in the early stages of the strike; the methods adopted, though in many cases still attended by physical violence, were less riotous; and no further serious conflict between the police and the rioters occurred till March. In that month the scene of the disturbances was Blaen-clydach. At that time pressure was being brought to bear on the strikers by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain to agree to a ballot on the terms of October 22nd, and on March 22nd, Messrs. W. E. Harvey and T. Ashton visited Tonypandy and interviewed the Workmen's Committee. Their plea for the taking of the ballot was treated with scorn and derision, and the two English labour leaders were hooted out of the town. Immediately after the departure of the English deputation a procession, 5,000 strong, marched against the Cambrian Colliery, Clydach Vale. In Howard Street, at a distance of about 100 yards from the colliery offices, the head of the procession was met by a strong police force consisting of Inspector Edwards, two sergeants, and 10 Glamorgan constables, and Inspector Barry, two sergeants and 38 constables of the Monmouthshire police. Asked the purpose of the demonstration, William John and John Hopla, two of the local leaders, said they were marching on the colliery as a protest against the action of some of the strikers in resuming work there without the consent of the Federation. They were told by the Inspectors that the police were there to protect property and to maintain order, and that the procession would not be allowed to proceed a step further. Could a few of them, they then asked, be allowed to enter the colliery and speak to the men who were at work? The reply was that the police could give permission to none but men who were employed at the colliery. At this juncture Inspector Letheren and 54 constables arrived on the scene from the Tonypandy Skating Rink, and the procession was requested to disperse, as it was obstructing traffic. The men's leaders protested that their action was not illegal, and are stated to have added that both General Macready and Mr Lleufer Thomas had told them they might demonstrate in that way to better their cause. The procession then broke up, but shortly afterwards a large body of strikers, moving from the direction of the New Inn, Penygraig, approached the colliery on the other side of the valley and attacked some of the surface buildings. The engine shed was partially wrecked, and huge boulders were rolled down the mountain into the colliery, imperilling the safety of 20 to 30 workmen. In response to a demand for further police assistance, Inspector Evans

The March Riots.

and 30 Glamorgans, Sergt. Hunter and 14 Merthyr men, and Sergt. Rounds and 4 Swansea men, hurried to the scene along a deep railway cutting running up from Penygraig to Clydach Vale. The cutting was commanded by a steep coal tip on one side and on the other by a natural terrace running almost parallel to the main street of Blaen-clydach. On the tip and terrace large bodies of men, youths, women and children had gathered, and as the police entered the cutting on their way to the Cambrian Colliery they were loudly cheered The cheers, however, proved a mere decoy, for no sooner had the police proceeded some distance along the railway cutting than some of the rioters cut them off, while the others mercilessly stoned them from the tip and the terrace. Badly cut and bruised the police fought their way up the side of the coal tips, pursued their assailants to the foot of the mountain on the southern side of the Valley, and eventually joined the main force near the Cambrian Colliery offices on the northern or Blaen-clydach side of the valley. Then, with a strong contingent consisting of the younger constables belonging to the several forces, Inspector Edwards crossed the valley and ordered his men to charge and dislodge the strikers. The ascent was steep and difficult ; stones fell thickly among them and whizzed past dangerously near to their heads ; and though advancing in open order several of the constables were struck. Cover, however, was plentiful ; and step by step a position was gained from which they eventually found it an easy task to put the strikers to flight. Minor encounters took place also between the rioters and two isolated bodies of police who were operating at other points ; but late in the afternoon all the rioters had retreated either to Penygraig or Tonypandy.

On the following afternoon rioting was renewed at Blaen-clydach. A colliery official returning from work at the Cambrian Colliery was surrounded and badly treated by a truculent crowd of between 400 and 500 strikers near the Central Hotel in the main road. P.S. Wilson and a small force of police ran to his assistance from their quarters at the Bush Hotel, but had hardly reached the official than they were called to defend themselves from a fierce attack from all sides, and out of this incident there ensued a series of assaults on the police, which were maintained till 8 o'clock at night. Enormously outnumbered and overpowered, Wilson and his men had to retire temporarily, and calls for assistance were sent to Inspector Edwards at the Clydach Vale Colliery as well as to the Skating Rink. On the arrival of these contingents—which increased the strength of the police to over 100—the majority of the rioters had taken up positions in short steep side streets running into the main road. With no better weapon than a truncheon the police, as they had on so many previous occasions during the strike, found themselves called

upon to cope with a situation not only of great difficulty, but also of unusual peril. On the mountain side at the Cambrian Colliery they had plenty of ground on which to operate and in which to carry out flanking movements without any risks from counter-flanking and rear attacks ; but here they were engaged in the suppression of a riot in which they had to act in bodies and in a district so disaffected that most of the houses in it were refuges for their assailants and treacherous attacking points against the police. The latter made several successful charges through clouds of stones against the strikers who pelted them from the steep side streets, and, when those streets had been cleared, afterwards from the still higher altitude of the mountain side ; but while engaged in these frontal attacks the police were frequently set upon from the rear by strikers who had been in hiding, and to turn back and pursue these other assailants was like chasing rabbits in a field with a myriad warrens, so quickly did they disappear. In spite of these difficulties and disadvantages the police held courageously to their work and on the appearance in the rear of a strong relieving force—which, by making a wide detour from the direction of Tonypandy, had reached positions above those held by the rioters—the mob fled in all directions. They were pursued by the relief force, and at 8 o'clock the police had cleared the streets and restored order. During this day's riots, in which 17 constables were injured, a slaughter-house belonging to Jones Bros., butchers, Tonypandy, was destroyed by fire.

There was a renewal of rioting also on March 24th. Originating in an attack on a number of colliery officials in Howard Street, Blaen-clydach, the disorders led to another tussle between the police and the rioters, but on this occasion the latter were quickly dispersed. The arrival at Blaen-clydach of Captain Hall and 40 men of the Royal Munster Fusiliers completed the work of the civil forces. There were street disturbances at night, and the shop windows of local tradesmen were wrecked and looted, but there were no further serious encounters between the mob and the police. Intimidation, however, continued rampant. At Clydach Vale, on March 25th, a Cambrian Colliery haulier was surrounded by strikers and so outrageously maltreated that when removed in an unconscious condition and medically examined he was found suffering from a badly bruised eye, an incised wound behind the left ear (caused by a stone blow), a cut on the nose, and bruises on the left cheek ; while in the same district on March 26th, an ostler, employed at the Cambrian Colliery, was followed into his own house, struck on the head with a stick, then dragged into the street, and kicked and beaten on the ground. On March 27th, the solicitors of Jones Bros., butchers, Court Street, Tonypandy, wrote to the Chief Constable complaining of the molestation of their assistants while attending to the flocks on the mountain side, and stating that they had lost upwards of two dozen

sheep, whose skins and entrails had been found on the mountain, and that one of the partners of the firm had left the district through fear. The police authorities, too, made serious complaint to the Post Office and telephone authorities against the tampering with telephone wires, the betrayal of secret orders, and the ineffectiveness of calls. During the rioting of March 23-25th the police operations were handicapped considerably through these causes, and representations were made to the effect that the leakages "at such a critical time were detrimental to all concerned in preparing for disturbances or in quelling them."

During April the strike district was comparatively tranquil. Though they had become convinced of the hopelessness of their position, the strikers offered a sullen and obstinate antagonism to all the influences brought to bear upon them to resume work. The police, however, had no more serious trouble with them till the first week in May. Since the March outbreaks a fairly large number of the surface men had taken advantage of the peace which followed to resume their employment without consultation with the local Strike Committee. The May troubles, though to some extent inspired by the resentment of the strikers at what they considered the infidelity of these workmen to the Federation, were nevertheless due, mainly, to a campaign against all workmen in the mid-Rhondda Federation district who were non-unionists. One of these men, employed at the Blaen-clydach Abergorky Colliery, owned by the Blaen-clydach Colliery Company, was on the afternoon of May 3rd met in the colliery by an anti-non-unionist procession, forcibly robed in a white shirt, and hustled in the direction of his home. He was rescued by a body of police and escorted home without further trouble. The following day similar proceedings were taken against another non-unionist. As a precautionary measure Supt. Williams had ordered Insp. Edwards and 10 constables to proceed to the colliery premises, and had sent P.S. Gwilym Davies and 10 other men to strengthen the resident police in the main road at Blaen-clydach. At 2.45 p.m. a procession headed by a workman robed in a white shirt emerged into the main road from the direction of the colliery, and was passing the Royal Hotel, Blaen-clydach, when Insp. Edwards and his force held it up, removed the shirt, and detached three or four constables to act as an escort to the non-unionist as far as his home in Tonypandy. The crowd, which up to this stage had consisted mainly of men employed at the Blaen-clydach Colliery, was augmented by a considerable number of strikers, who resented the action of the police and fiercely stoned them. The attack, which was as sudden as it was fierce, stunned and drew blood from the faces of several of the police, but it was successfully repelled by a baton charge, in which a large number of the rioters

May "White-shirt" Disorders.

were caught at close quarters, and the streets was quickly cleared. Attracted to the scene by the shouting and the booing, large bodies of strikers then took up positions in the side streets commanding the main road, and rained stones on the police from several directions. Within the next half-hour Insp. Edwards was reinforced first by Supt. Williams and 22 Merthyr and Glamorgan constables and immediately afterwards by Supt. Coles (Devon) and 51 Lancashire, Devon, Glamorgan and Merthyr men. In response to an appeal from Supt. Williams some of the strikers at this juncture left the scene, but the majority refused and a large body of them were charged and bludgeoned. This decisive step led to the flight of the rioters in all directions ; and so improved became the situation that Supt. Williams ordered the return of the police to the Skating Rink in small squads, leaving the streets in charge of the street duty men. The disappearance of the rioters and the quietness of the strikers who remained in the streets proved a malicious ruse, and when the last squad in charge of Sergt. Smith (Glamorgan) was moving away from its position in Court Street a large crowd of strikers swept down upon it from Thomas Street and Charles Street and stoned it heavily at close quarters. Calling upon his men to halt and turn about, Sergt. Smith bravely faced his assailants, and, realising that it was the only way out of a critical position, ordered the squad to draw staves and charge. Though a mere handful dealing with a mob several scores strong the police attacked strongly and the rioters were once again quickly in flight. A considerable number of them, however, took up a position on high ground in a new unnamed street intersecting Thomas Street and Charles Street and commanding the main road, and so hot was the attack which they sustained from this vantage point that they compelled the squad to take shelter in Thomas Street. Supt. Williams then came to the relief of the squad with a small party of police and ordered the combined force to rush the main position occupied by the rioters. Owing to the hazardous character of the task and the physical difficulties of the situation the police executed this movement in single file at the double on each side of the roadway. They carried it through, too, in the teeth of a continuous torrent of missiles, and so tenaciously did the rioters hold their position that they did not give way till the police were within three or four paces of them. The last to take to his heels was a colliery repairer, who at close quarters severely injured Supt. John Williams with a stone and struck Sergt. Smith with another. He was pursued into Charles Street, arrested, and taken into custody. In this charge every member of the force engaged was struck ; but it broke the back of the disturbance and there was no further rioting that night. The official list of police casualties gave 17 men more or less seriously injured.

A Tight Corner.

Last of the Riots.

The last of the mid-Rhondda riots took place on July 25th at the Penygraig Nantgwyn of the Naval Company. The strikers had taken umbrage at the action of certain workmen in accepting employment at the pits of the Naval Company and at the close of a meeting held at noon in the mid-Rhondda Grounds marched in procession, 3,000 strong, towards Penygraig. At the Ely Pit, which the police authorities had previously been informed was the main objective of the demonstration, the strikers were met by a police cordon drawn two deep across the entrance. A parley took place between Insp T. Williams and the leaders, one of whom is alleged to have exclaimed "It is time this strike was settled, and we have come here to get the blacklegs away." Insp. Williams warned the leaders that they would be held responsible for any damage or injury done, and offered to accompany a deputation into the colliery to, if permitted, interview the men at work. This offer was accepted, and Insp. Williams and Wagstaff (Worcester), with William John, James Ivins, John Rees, John Hopla, and Ted Hughes, entered the colliery, but Mr. Benson, the under-manager, refused them permission to see any of the workmen. While the interview with Mr. Benson was in progress, a large number of the strikers worked their way behind the engine house and stoned it as the engine driver was in the act of lowering some men down the mine. The stones crashed through the window and the roof and fell all around him ; but he held undismayed to the lever and succeeded in lowering the cage without mishap. A.S. Thomas and four constables, who were sent to drive the rioters away from the precincts of the colliery, were badly received, and in the course of a few minutes four of the party were rendered more or less incapable. Acting Sergt. Thomas was struck on the left eye with a stone ; P.C. Jones received a blow on the head which carried away his helmet ; P.C. Ballard (Worcester) was severely wounded with a cut on the head extending over two inches long and reaching to the bone ; and P.C. Ashford (Worcester) was injured in the thigh. After the abortive consultation between the deputation and Mr. Benson one of the leaders addressed the strikers. He complained that they had been refused permission to see the blacklegs, and had been advised to see Mr. Llewelyn. But they had had enough of deputations, and were determined to remain there and have an understanding with the blacklegs when they came out. By this time, a large proportion of the strikers had got completely out of hand, and, invading the colliery yard from the rear or mountain side, they put a saw mill engine in motion and attempted to damage the pipes connecting the boilers with the colliery reservoir. Stone throwing also became general, and urgent messages were sent to the police headquarters at Tonypandy for reinforcements. Inspector Salter arrived on the scene with 36 men and immediately set to work

to clear the colliery yard and drive the rioters from the mountain side. Several baton charges were made, but the rioters offered a stubborn resistance and their persistent stone throwing led to a large number of casualties. Shortly after 3 o'clock, when the fighting at the Ely Pit had been in progress for over 1½ hours, the rioters were strengthened by the arrival of nearly 1,000 strikers from the Naval Company's Nantgwyn Colliery, where a demonstration had been in progress simultaneously with that at the Ely Pit. The protest made at that pit against the continued employment of blacklegs did not lead to any serious disorders, and the movement of the strikers to the Ely Colliery released Inspector Walker and 30 men who had been hurriedly sent there in response to an urgent call for assistance. This force arrived at the Ely Colliery soon after the strikers and brought the total number of police engaged in the defence of that property to over 100. Against between 3,000 and 4,000 desperate rioters spread out along the mountain side, well out of the reach of the police and employed in rolling down huge boulders in the direction of the colliery, the police force was hopelessly inadequate, and it became necessary to call in the aid of the military. At 5 o'clock a company of the Somerset Light Infantry, under the command of Major Thickness, surprised the rioters by appearing in extended order on the mountain top armed with fixed bayonets and ball cartridge. They carried their rifles in their hands, and when they were observed to be engaged in an enveloping movement the rioters fled. The troops drove the rioters into the town, where they were charged and dispersed. During the afternoon there was a disturbance also at the Pandy Pit, in which three constables were injured. The presence of the military in the district had a decisive influence on the general situation, and after their arrival the police experienced very little difficulty in clearing the streets. In these riots 37 members of the Glamorgan, Worcester, Cardigan, and Derby police forces were injured.

Infantry Demonstrations.

On the following day information was conveyed to the police of an intention on the part of the strikers to storm the Cambrian Colliery at Blaen-Clydach, and extensive police and military precautions were taken to protect the property. Major Thickness and a detachment of the Somersetshire Light Infantry occupied a hill overhanging the colliery and forming the key to the position and on the lower ground covered by the military the police were in strong force under the command of the Chief Constable. Thus check-mated the strikers returned in the direction of the Glamorgan Colliery at Llwynypia, whence they were followed by the military as well as by the police. Minor disturbances, in one of which a colliery official was white-shirted and cruelly treated,

took place, but a conflict between the main bodies of the strikers and the police and military forces was happily averted.

At this period scores of collieries were idle in the coalfield as the result of the seamen's strike at Cardiff, and the strikers, strengthened by thousands of other miners, had arranged to march in procession to Cardiff, on Friday, July 28th, as an expression of their sympathy with the cause of the sailors and firemen, who had brought out many other grades of labour at Cardiff, Barry, and Newport. The coalition of all these disturbing forces suggested grave possibilities, and, to cope with any emergency that might have arisen, the police forces were strengthened, and four companies of the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment—numbering 273 non-commissioned officers and men—under the command of Major Lloyd were hurriedly drafted into Pontypridd. A troop train was kept in readiness, power was obtained from the magistrates to close all public houses between Pontypridd and Cardiff, and it was arranged that when the procession had passed through Pontypridd the troop train with police as well as infantry, would follow it as far as Whitchurch, and from that point to Cardiff it was to be accompanied by police and the military. In the early hours, however, of the morning of the 28th the seamen's strike was settled, and the procession was abandoned at the last moment. The Loyal North Lancashire Infantry left Pontypridd on July 29th; and in the first week of October the last of the other military forces turned their backs on the strike districts and returned to their headquarters.

CHAPTER VI.

THE "P.D." NEGOCIATIONS AND SETTLEMENT.

Mr. Hann and Mr. Stanton.—The chief points in dispute at the Powell Duffryn Collieries.—Workmen's Grievances and Mr. Hann's Replies.—Mr. Stanton's Offending Message.—Coalowners demand an Apology.—Conciliation Board's proposed terms for resumption of Work.—Strikers' Resentment.—The Executive Council refuse Financial Support.—The Reason for the Refusal.—Revolt of the Aberdare Valley Strikers against the Executive.—A Projected Unofficial Conference condemned by Miners' Leaders.—Mr. Stanton Apologises.—His Correspondence with Mr. Hann.—He Resents an Insinuation.—Friction and Disunity among the Leaders.—An abortive Conference between the Strikers and the Executive Council.—Advocacy of a General South Wales Strike.—Decision of an Unofficial Conference.—Executive Council gives way and agrees to call an official Delegate Conference of the whole Coalfield.—Aberdare Strikers are advised to return to work on Conciliation Board terms, and are voted a grant of £2,000.—Another Executive Surrender.—Coalowners decline to modify the Conciliation Board terms.—Nearing the End.—Further Relief Grants.—The Last Hitch.—Work Resumed at "P.D." Pits.—Failure and Cost of the Strike.

There is no need to dwell on the militant features of the strikes in the Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys. They stand out only too obviously self-revealed in the authentic story of the rioting told in the preceding pages; and in the narrative of the negociations which in the end brought peace to those two distracted districts and is told in the following pages those same features can be none the less unmistakably traced. The policy of violence to which the miners had committed themselves on the very threshold of the struggle and which they had enforced with such excesses against life and property as to establish at certain periods what was in a very grimly real sense a reign of terror, was the policy also which they pursued in their efforts to achieve their aims through the channels of negociation. The strikers were members of a trade union to which by far the larger number of the miners in the coalfield were attached and which has a constitution framed to deal collectively with all the diverse labour troubles of the mining industry; through their authorised representatives they were parties with the employers to a system

of conciliation which derived its moral force from the principle of collective bargaining and its administrative power from the service of men of practical experience as well as of wide industrial and commercial knowledge; while as members of the South Wales Miners' Federation they were affiliated to a national organization which, whatever be its faults, cannot be said to be unmindful of the genuine common interests of the miners of the country. The violence done by the strikers to these constitutions and systems was, as will be gathered from the narrative of the negociations which follows, no less egregious than that done by them to persons and to property, and in its ultimate purpose it was as ineffectual in the one as it was in the other direction.

Mr. Hann and Mr. Stanton.

The circumstances under which the Aberdare Valley strike began and was extended to collieries entirely unaffected by the dispute at the collieries of the Powell Duffryn Company have already been described. Reference has also been made to the breaking off of negociations between Mr. E. M. Hann (the general manager of the Powell Duffryn Company) and Mr. C. B. Stanton (the miners' agent in the Aberdare Valley), in consequence of the message sent by Mr. Stanton to Mr. George Hann on October 27th, and to the determination of the strikers to agree to no meeting with Mr. Hann unless they were allowed to be accompanied by their agent and leader. We shall now take up the thread of the story of the Aberdare struggle from that point. Replying to Mr. Hann's letter declining to meet him Mr. Stanton wrote, "I meant what I said, sir, but meant well," and on October 29th a mass meeting of the Powell Dyffryn workmen passed a resolution in which they expressed their regret at "the evidently wrong construction placed by Mr. Hann on the words of the message sent by our agent," and asked Mr. Hann to again meet the deputation which had waited upon him on October 26th. Mr. Hann replied that he had given no promise to meet the deputation by any fixed date. At the request of Mr. Idris Davies, the workmen's local secretary, Mr. Hann gave the men permission to bring their tools out of the collieries on November 1st, but added that, though declining, in the interest of law and order, to meet Mr. Stanton, he was "still prepared to meet the workmen's committee and to listen to and discuss the alleged grievances with a view of obviating the continuance of the appalling loss to the community caused by the present position of affairs."

Though the strike began ostensibly in a protest on the part of the workmen against the notice prohibiting the taking away of firewood, it was rapidly made to embrace a large number of other grievances, and these were tabulated and distributed throughout the coalfield as a defence and a justification of the stoppage. On November 2nd Mr. Hann replied in detail to the workmen's complaints. The

Chief Points in Dispute.

majority of them, though of a local and personal character, were such as suggested the local existence of a great deal of acrimony in the relations between some of the workmen and the local managers; but they raised two points of principle of general interest to the coalfield—one concerning the respective obligations of owners and workmen under the provisions of the Conciliation Board Agreement, and the other relating to the customs and practices of the coalfield in regard to the payment for work done in abnormal places. On these two questions the respective positions of the workmen and the employers are shown in the following quotations from official statements published in the Press on November 2nd and November 4th:—

THE FIREWOOD QUESTION.

WORKMEN'S COMPLAINT.

"The violation by the Company of Clause 24 of the Conciliation Board Agreement by the posting of a notice at the pithead forbidding the continuance of the custom of carrying home waste timber for firewood, and the undue interference with and intimidation of the workmen by the Company's officials and police in trying to suppress the custom. . . . . The clause lays it down that 'the owners and workmen at the respective collieries shall be bound to observe and fulfil, and shall be subject to, all customs, provisions, and conditions existing in December, 1899, at the collieries respectively, and no variation shall be made therein by the owners or workmen except by mutual arrangement at the collieries respectively, or by a decision of the Board after a reference thereto in accordance with the provisions of Clause 5.' The custom of carrying home waste timber has existed for the past 40 years without interruption."

MR. E. M. HANN'S REPLY.

"There was no violation of the Conciliation Board Agreement by the Company's notice. It can never become a right or a custom for a workman to take away any materials simply because he thinks they are waste. If it were assumed to be a violation of the Agreement, the remedy is prescribed by that Agreement, which especially forbids cessation of work until the disputed matter has been referred to the Conciliation Board. There was no urgency in the matter. It amounts to 6d. per month at the most to any individual, and the workmen know quite well that had the Company been proved to be in the wrong the money would have been refunded. The Company is not called upon to provide firewood at all, and the offer made of 6d. per cwt. delivered to the workmen's houses is a perfectly reasonable one."

THE ABNORMAL PLACES QUESTION.

WORKMEN'S COMPLAINT.

"The refusal of the Company's management to consider payment to men working in abnormal places. . . . Further, in cases where allowances have been made, the amounts have been utterly inadequate to meet the circumstances. . . . . The wages of the miners at the Powell Duffryn Collieries, in common with those at the other collieries in the South Wales coalfield and the other coalfields, are now entirely at the mercy of officials, whose interest and consequent endeavour is to get the work done as cheaply as possible, without regard to fair reward. Men have to accept whatever the officials deign to offer, the alternative being to 'take your tools out.' The men of the Powell Duffryn collieries refuse to submit to this any longer. We demand the guarantee of a living wage."

(The workmen accompanied these complaints with the particulars of 299 cases, in which they alleged "the wages varied from 4/- plus percentage to 5¾d. inclusive of percentage.")

MR. E. M. HANN'S REPLY.

"Neither the Company nor its officials have ever refused to consider extra payment of men working in abnormal places. The instructions are that the extra work or difficulty is to be carefully and justly valued and paid for. The Company declines to guarantee a minimum wage until an efficient guarantee is given them that an adequate day's work will be done in return for the wage. With respect to your list of 299 cases of low wages, I find only 76 had worked full time Consequently the others could have earned more than they did, not only by means of the additional time, but because the working places would be better if worked regularly. I find also numerous cases where there is nothing wrong with the working places, and the men next adjoining on each side have made far better earnings—in numerous cases up to double the earnings of the person named in the list. There are cases on the list of men who are either from age or physical unfitness of some kind unable to earn up to the average. There are some men who have been found repeatedly by the officials lying down, and others not having started at times varying from seven o'clock up to as late as eleven o'clock. Undoubtedly, the majority of men used diligence and earned

> good wages, and it is an error to suppose we have made a general charge against the men. We have important cases in which the wages were prejudiced by the workmen disregarding the instructions of the officials as to how the place should be worked. There is a considerable number of cases of youths who have recently been working on daily wage for a collier at such rates as 4/- to 4/6 per day gross, who, on taking a place for themselves, expect to make much more, but for want of experience cannot make as much. Repeatedly within the past two years the managers have offered to test fairly what can be done in the places when these complaints have been made to them, but in every case this has been declined"

Owners Demand an Apology.

At a meeting of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, held at Cardiff, on Monday, November 7th, Mr. Stanton appealed to the Council to convene a general conference of the coalfield to consider the alternative policies of a levy or a general stoppage in support of the issues involved in the Powell Duffryn strike. The majority of the Council were opposed to both these courses; and flatly declined to call the suggested conference. The Council agreed, however, to raise the Aberdare question at the next meeting of the Conciliation Board. They did so at the meeting of that Board held on Monday, November 14th, and the official report of that day's meeting was in the following terms:—

> "A considerable time was occupied by the Joint Board in the discussion of the position which had arisen in the Powell Duffryn, Cwmaman, and Bwllfa collieries in the Aberdare Valley, where the workmen of these collieries are now on strike without notice. At the close of the discussion, and in response to the pressing request of the workmen's representatives that some strong efforts should be made to restore peace in the affected district, the workmen's

representatives being very desirous that work should be resumed, the owners' representatives made a proposal as to the terms on which the owners of the collieries affected would consent to the resumption of operations, and the workmen's representatives promised to give the matter their very careful consideration."

The proposal referred to in the above statement was as follows :—

"Provided that all the men that are required to return to work in the Aberdare associated collieries at once, and providing that Mr. Stanton apologises to Mr. Hann for the part he has taken in the recent proceedings and undertakes to abide by the Conciliation Board Agreement in future, Mr. Hann, after the resumption of work, will be prepared to meet the workmen's committee with Mr. Stanton."

The strikers in the Aberdare Valley lost no time in making known their views on these terms. They were communicated to the strikers as the proposal of the Board as a whole, but on Tuesday, November 15th, at a mass meeting held at the Market Hall, Aberdare, and stated to have been attended by over 8,000 workmen, the terms were bitterly condemned, and on the recommendation of the Strike Committee, which had previously met in private session, the following resolution was adopted unanimously :—

"That this meeting agrees to Mr. Stanton, the miners' agent, expressing his regret to Mr. Hann for the telephonic message he sent if that had caused Mr. Hann any pain, but we cannot agree to the other suggestions submitted by the Conciliation Board ; if Mr. Hann is prepared to meet a deputation, including Mr. Stanton, we are prepared to do so at once."

By this resolution, which expressed a revolt against the authority of the Conciliation Board, the strikers continued in that course of irregularity in which they began the strike. They came out, not only in contravention of their contracts, but also against the express provisions in the Wages Agreement requiring the reference in the first instance to the management, then to the Conciliation Board of disputed matters, and as a final course the service of a month's notice. To have agreed to the consideration of alleged grievances which had not reached the Board in a constitutional manner would have been tantamount to a condonation of the irregular proceedings of the workmen. It was this consideration, coupled with the circumstance that the stoppage was illegal in its origin, which made the coalowners' representatives on the Conciliation Board firm in their insistence on resumption of work as a condition of the consideration of the alleged grievances. The strikers now added to their previous errors the mistake of repudiating both the collective

authority of the Conciliation Board as the final arbiter of disputes and the direct authority of their accredited representatives on that body. In character, though not in degree, it was the same revolt against authority that had precipitated the stoppage in the mid-Rhondda district. Though the independent action taken by the Cambrian Combine miners had not been endorsed by a ballot vote of the members of the South Wales Miners' Federation—the Sept. ballot having taken place prior to the Mabon-Davis settlement of October 22nd—yet it was sanctioned by the action of the Executive allowing the September ballot to take effect and by granting strike pay. It was towards the winning of a similar sanction, and of the financial support which such a sanction would have carried with it, that the leaders of the Aberdare strike next applied their energies. As matters then stood they were neither regularly nor legally entitled to assistance from the funds of the Federation. Rule 44 of that body provides that :—

> "No lodge, or part thereof, shall give notice of a strike before first securing the permission of the monthly meeting. Any number of men coming out on strike without complying with this condition shall forfeit all claims on or protection from this Federation."

The Aberdare recalcitrants, however, were determined not to allow the letter of the constitution of their Federation to defeat their purposes. In spite of a Federation rule providing that when members are on strike and in receipt of strike pay the control and guidance of their lodge or lodges shall be vested in the Executive, they saw that the Strike Committee in the Cambrian Combine dispute were keeping a firm hand on all the reins in the conduct of the mid-Rhondda strike though drawing strike pay, and could not see why the constitution could not be suspended in their case as well as in that of their fellow members in an adjoining valley. Their plan of action was to persist in their demand for financial support and at the same time bring pressure to bear on an apparently unsympathetic Executive through the agency of an unofficial conference of the whole coalfield. In this plan they received the active support of the Cambrian Combine strikers, but by the Executive Council the decision to convene an unofficial conference was ignored, and a meeting of that body, held at Cardiff on November 17th, is stated to have been one of the most stormy even in the tempestuous career of that trade union. Mr. Stanton fought hard for action along general lines and for some form of temporary financial aid to the Aberdare miners, but received no active support from many other members of the Council, and he left the meeting disappointed and empty-handed. In the

Miners' Revolt against Executive Council.

official report of that meeting, over which Mabon presided, the reason given for the refusal of financial support was expressed in the following terms :—" If the request were granted the Executive would have an injunction made against it within a fortnight, and those injunction proceedings would so tie up the funds of the Federation as to prevent the Council extending financial support even to those workmen who through lock-outs and authorised strikes are at present receiving strike pay." At this meeting, too, the members of the Council endeavoured to persuade Mr. Stanton to join them in another appeal to the men to accept the terms suggested by the Conciliation Board, but though indifferent as to what action the Council itself might decide on this point he refused to join the Council in such an appeal, and for this reason the Council abandoned the suggestion. The proposal to call an unofficial conference was also considered at this meeting, and a resolution was adopted—Mr. Stanton alone dissenting—strongly urging the members of the Federation to disregard any invitations which they might receive to attend it. This recommendation, however, received a mixed reception from the members of the Federation ; the unofficial conference was held at Cardiff, on Monday, November 21st, and was attended by 141 delegates representing 62,000 workmen. The proceedings, which were held within closed doors, terminated with a decision to adjourn till Tuesday, November 29th, and an instruction to the delegates to obtain a mandate from their lodges in favour of the policy of an immediate general stoppage.

Mr. Stanton Apologises to Mr. Hann.

At this stage of the dispute the correspondence between Mr. Stanton and Mr. Hann was resumed with the following letter from the Aberdare agent to Mr. Hann :—

November 20th, 1910.

" To E. M. Hann, Esq., General Manager, Powell Duffryn Company, Aberaman.

" Dear Sir,—Having regard to the view you take of certain words of mine over the telephone—quite an erroneous view, by the way—and having regard to the fact that my words are capable of misinterpretation, I have no objection to withdrawing them, and now do so in the interest of peace and the men I represent, and beg to remain, Sir, yours truly,

" C. B. STANTON."

On November 23rd Mr. Hann sent the following reply to Mr. Stanton :—

" Dear Sir,—I duly received your letter of the 20th inst., and note that you withdraw the words contained in the telephone message sent by you some time ago. I can only repeat that such words, to my mind, are capable of only one interpretation. However, I accept your withdrawal.

"I have been informed of the brutal treatment which several officials of the Company have been subjected to, and the attempts made to prevent them attending to their duties. This intimidation and riotous conduct cannot be tolerated, and must be put an end to before I make any appointment to discuss matters.—Yours truly, E. M. HANN."

Two days' later Mr. Hann forwarded to Mr. Stanton another letter to the following effect :—

"Dear Sir,—Referring to my letter to you of the 23rd inst., I am glad to see that there has been a cessation of the ill-treatment to which the officials of the Company were being subjected. As you are aware, it was arranged at the Conciliation Board meeting of the 14th inst. that, the workmen having come out in breach of their agreement, they should return to work and their alleged grievances should be dealt with in the usual way, this to apply to such workmen whose services the Company requires, as it was explained at that meeting that the Company intended stopping certain workings which had proved remunerative. It was also part of the arrangement come to that you should apologise and undertake to abide by the Conciliation Board Agreement in future. As I have already intimated, I accept your apology, and upon your giving the undertaking referred to the Company will be prepared to allow the resumption of work, and I will make an appointment with you and the Committee to discuss matters. Failing agreement, they will, of course, be dealt with by the Conciliation Board. This, you are aware, is in accordance with the terms of the Conciliation Board Agreement and its usual practice.—Yours truly, E. M. HANN."

But Resents an Insinuation.

While the previous correspondence was in progress between Mr. Stanton and Mr. Hann the dispute came before a meeting of the Coalowners' Association, and there is no doubt that the firm attitude adopted by the owners at that meeting in regard to the insistence of the acceptance by the workmen of the terms laid down by the Board on November 14th was responsible to some extent for the tone and matter of the letter just given. Replying to this letter on November 28th, Mr. Stanton wrote :—

"November 28th, 1910.

"Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge your letters of the 23rd and 26th inst, but on behalf of the Joint Committee and myself I resent the insinuation contained regarding the ill-treatment of some of your officials. We are, sir, in no way responsible for what has happened.

"In the second paragraph of your letter you remind me of

the Coal Board's decision that the men should return to work, and afterwards that the alleged grievances should be dealt with in the usual way. I must remind you, sir, that you stated before a strong deputation of the men and myself that no re-start would be made until all the grievances were settled.

"Regarding my future conduct, it must be measured by the Company's treatment of the workmen. If you and your officials will undertake not to violate the Conciliation Board Agreement I also will give the same pledge, but it must be no one-sided arrangement. On this undertaking I am ready to meet you with a deputation of the workmen to endeavour to settle, and beg to remain, sir, yours truly, C. B. STANTON."

This correspondence did not lead to any immediate improvement in the situation, and while it was in progress the organisers of the unofficial conference were trimming their sails to the breezes of the moment. Realising that that conference was more likely to accentuate than to minimise the disunity in the ranks of the workmen, and discovering that many of the members of the Federation, though strongly opposed to the encouragement of unconstitutional procedures, were not now objecting in principle to a general conference, the revolters devoted themselves to an effort to persuade the Executive Council to take over the unofficial conference. They did not at once succeed in that purpose, but they gradually drove the Executive from the position it had originally taken up, and eventually compelled a compromise in which they claimed the advantage. The first stage of the retreat of the Executive was a decision arrived at a meeting of that body held at Cardiff on Thursday, November 24th, asking the representatives both of the Cambrian Combine and the Aberdare Joint Committees to meet it at Cardiff on the following day. That meeting, presided over by Mr. W. Abraham, M.P., sat from half-past four in the afternoon till half-past nine at night, when the following brief statement was made to the Press :—

"At the Park Hall to-day the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation met the Joint Committees of the Cambrian Combine and Aberdare workmen with a view of trying to arrive at a settlement as to the future mode of procedure dealing with the disputes in the Aberdare and mid-Rhondda districts, but we regret to say that no agreement was arrived at."

The main point of difference between the Council and the Joint Committees was over the proposal of a general strike, in which the issue should embrace, not simply the alleged grievances of the Combine and the Aberdare workmen, but also the abnormal places, minimum wage demand and the raising of the wages of the lower paid day wage workmen. The advocates of this extreme course

argued that an immediate general stoppage would prove the most effective and the least costly method of bringing about a general settlement, but by the Executive members, and notably by Mabon, such a course was vigourously opposed. They pointed out that it would contravene all constitutional usage in dealing with disputes; they expressed their strong view that if the plan were put into operation it would be disastrous to the whole coalfield; they pleaded with the strikers to place their difficulties in the hands of the Council, and offered, if this were done, to accept full and collective responsibility for another effort to arrange a settlement, and promised to report the results of their efforts to a general conference. All these offers the representatives declined. They feared they would be out-manœuvred and their demand for a general conference suppressed. They suggested that in addition to taking over the unofficial conference for the following Tuesday the Executive should accept the agenda already drafted for that gathering and accept its decision. These suggestions the members of the Council in their turn rejected, for they realised that to have given way on such lines would not only to have officially countenanced the unconstitutional proceedings of the recalcitrants, but to have to all practical purposes handed over the authority and machinery of the Federation to a self-constituted and unauthorised body. The sharp differences revealed in the discussion at this meeting was reflected at the mass meetings held during the next few days, and at the adjourned unofficial conference held at Cardiff on Tuesday, November 29th, attended by 141 delegates representing 72,919 workmen, or approximately one-half of the members of the Federation and about one-third of the workmen, a resolution declaring for an immediate general stoppage, was defeated by 67 votes to 56. Eighteen of the delegates present abstained from voting. Some of these, and many of the delegates who had voted against the resolution, urged action along regular lines, and a deputation of 19 was appointed to wait on the Council and plead for the holding of a general conference within six days. The meeting between that deputation and the Council took place at Cardiff on Wednesday, November 30th, and it marked the final stage of the retreat of the Council from the position it had taken up a fortnight earlier. The official report of the proceedings, over which Mabon presided, was in the following terms :—

Executive Council and Financial Support.

> "Nearly the whole of the morning's proceedings were spent in considering the demands of the unofficial conference, and at 12.30 a strong deputation from that conference was admitted into the meeting. Alderman E. Fleming, Pontypridd, and Councillor Phillips, Abertillery, stated the case for the unofficial conference, and in doing so

emphasised the unanimity with which that conference had decided to appeal to the Council to convene an immediate official conference to deal, not only with the alleged grievances of the workmen in the disturbed districts, but also with the general situation. It was true that they had originally contemplated forcing matters to an issue without any further delay, but they were now convinced it would be better to proceed along constitutional lines. They also appealed to the Executive to extend some form of financial support to the Aberdare district, where, they stated, distress was acute and widespread. In the course of the discussion which followed this statement the members of the deputation expressed differences of opinion as to how far the official conference should be asked to go in dealing with the matters raised, and they were asked to retire and state in writing what they wanted. On their return they handed in a document in which they asked that an official conference be convened within six days to discuss the present position of affairs in the affected areas and to frame a future policy, and that financial assistance be given in some form to the Aberdare men with a view of relieving their distress. The deputation then withdrew, and after further discussion the Council decided unanimously to hold a conference, and, having regard to the acute distress prevailing in the Aberdare Valley, and on the representations of the deputation, to grant a sum of £2,000 to the Aberdare Relief (Central) Fund Committee for the relief of the distress of the wives and children of the strikers."

It will be seen from this report that the Council now not only gave way on the question of a general conference but also withdrew their opposition to the making of a financial grant to the Aberdare workmen. On November 17th the Council, in its reply to Mr. Stanton's request for financial support to the Aberdare men, held that those men had forfeited all claim to financial aid by the illegal and unauthorised origin of the stoppage, and pointed out that the granting of the request would have been followed by an injunction which would have tied up indefinitely the funds of the Federation and deprived those workmen of financial assistance who were constitutionally on the funds. How that interpretation of its powers is to be reconciled with its decision a fortnight later is difficult to understand. It is probably true that the distress prevalent on the 17th had become more acute on the 30th, and it is right to point out that the form in which the assistance was given was that of a relief grant and not of strike pay, but the objection urged against financial support of any kind on the earlier date was not one of expediency but of law. If there was any way by which that legal

responsibility could be surmounted or evaded the method of such evasion was as open to the Council on the 17th as on the 30th November. The matter was not taken to a court of law, and to the lay mind the rules of the Federation are too loosely drawn to enable one to speak with any confidence as to its legal aspect. But it appears hardly open to question that in the stand which they originally took the Executive were supported by the spirit if not the letter of the rules of their Union. The constitution limits the application of the funds of the Federation to the payment of strike pay, lock-out pay, victimisation pay, to the assistance of affiliated associations, to the carrying out of Rule 38 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1887 in regard to the inspection of collieries by workmen, and to the provision of a fund for the return and maintenance of members of Parliament and other public bodies (a provision declared illegal under the famous Osborne judgment). None of these provisions is apparently applicable to the Aberdare case, but Sub-section II. of Rule 3 states it to be one of the objects of the Federation "to protect workmen generally"; if this section was the justification of the grant of £2,000 it was always operative, and one is driven to the conclusion that the considerations which induced the Council to hold its hands on November 17th were considerations of expediency and not of law. The relations between the Council and Mr. Stanton at the time were very strained; the action, too, of the Council in condemning the illegal origin of the "P.D." strike and in associating itself with the decision of the Conciliation Board of November 14th had accentuated the estrangement between the Council and the Aberdare members of the Federation; while another factor which increased the difficulties of the Council was the circumstance that the mid-Rhondda strikers as well as a large body of other workmen had identified themselves with the pleas of the Aberdare men. All these things placed the Executive on the horns of a serious dilemma. To give financial assistance was to lay the Federation open to the charge of supporting a body of men who were engaged in an illegal strike and in the prosecution of unconstitutional methods; to refuse it was to lay the Executive open to a want of sympathy with the sufferings of the strikers, to prejudice against a local leader who, whatever his indiscretions, was not only the agent, but one who at the time commanded the full confidence of the overwhelming majority of the Powell Duffryn workmen, and to the risks of wholesale secessions. In such a dilemma the Council decided to follow the path of least resistance, and to risk public odium rather than the disruption of the Federation.

An Executive Surrender.

The Council, in spite of these difficulties, did not abandon its hope of an early settlement of the Aberdare trouble, and immediately at

the close of the meeting at which it decided to convene a general conference Mabon communicated with Mr. Gascoyne Dalziel, the Secretary of the Coalowners' Association, and arranged for a meeting of the Conciliation Board for Monday, December 5th, "to enable the workmen's representatives to emphasise the view already enunciated by Mr. Abraham as to the desirability of making another sincere effort to secure the observance of both the spirit and the letter of the Conciliation Board Agreement." At the meeting of the Conciliation Board on November 14th, Mabon had pleaded that the Agreement had in its spirit if not in its letter been violated by the owners as well as by the workmen, and on this plea had appealed to the owners' representatives to make an exception in the case of the Aberdare workmen and agree to the appointment of four or five conciliators from each side to enquire into their alleged grievances before the men resumed work. At the same time he did not wish that exception to be regarded as a precedent. That request the owners did not see their way to accede. Mr. F. L. Davis, reminding Mabon that the men were out on strike in violation of the terms of the Agreement as well as of their contracts, and emphasising the fact that that Agreement had only just been signed, said the owners could not agree to so important an exception. It is to that incident reference is made in the above quoted passage from the official report of the Executive Council's meeting. The Board met on December 5th, and the official report of that day's proceedings was in the following terms :—

> "A meeting of the Board of Conciliation for Monmouthshire and South Wales was held at Cardiff to-day, Mr. F. L. Davis presiding over the owners' side and Mr. Alfred Onions over the workmen's side. The meeting was held at the request of the workmen's representatives in order, as they stated, to consider the position in the coalfield in relation to the general agreement. Mr. Onions said as regards the stoppage at the Powell Dyffryn Colliery, the workmen's representatives suggest that before the men return to work the Company should withdraw the notices they had put up in regard to taking away firewood, and that the Company and the men should negociate on this matter after the resumption of work, and further, that although the owners had on the 14th of November stated that only the men required should return to work, the workmen's representatives suggest that the whole of the men should be allowed to return now, and that the Company could, if necessary, later on give notice to the men in those places that were to be stopped, and so give them a chance of finding employment. . . . . Mr. F. L. Davis stated with regard to the Powell Dyffryn stoppage that the owners

could not accept the suggestion of the workmen's representatives and the owners must adhere to the decision of November 14th last, which the workmen's representatives had unanimously recommended the Aberdare workmen to accept. Mr. Davis also pointed out that this offer having now been made three weeks ago, and not having been so far accepted, it must not be taken as indefinitely open to acceptance."

Nearing the End.

It is important to draw attention here to the fact that the Executive Council, by their request that the Company and the men should negociate "on this matter" after the resumption of work, had moved away slightly from the position taken up by Mr. Stanton and in the direction of that adopted by the Coalowners' Association. It seems clear from the correspondence that the original purpose of the Company was to have insisted on a settlement of all outstanding disputes at their Aberdare Valley pits before work was resumed, but the Association, in its impartial desire to secure conformity to the provisions of the Conciliation Board, insisted on the observance by the Company, no less than by the workmen, of the constitutional methods for dealing with disputes provided by the terms of the Wages Agreement. The acceptance, however, of this principle by the workmen's representatives on the Conciliation Board was a conditional acceptance, for attached to it were the demands that the Company should take back all the workmen who had struck work, whether their services were needed or not, and that they should also withdraw the notice posted up at the pits in regard to taking away firewood. The workmen's representatives, too, ignored the request of the owners' representatives that Mr. Stanton should give an undertaking to abide in future by the Conciliation Board Agreement. Under these circumstances the owners' representatives rejected the workmen's proposal, and this was the situation when the official conference met at Cardiff on December 7th. That conference was attended by delegates representing 152,559 workmen, and the official report was in the following terms :—

"The general conference was called for the purpose of considering the matters in dispute at the Cambrian Combine and the Aberdare Valley collieries. The General Secretary (Mr. T Richards) gave a report on the attempts that had been made by the Executive Council to secure a settlement of the disputes in these two districts, and after speeches by Messrs. C. B. Stanton, Truman, and W. Abraham, the Executive Council submitted the following recommendations :—

The Aberdare Dispute.—The Council recommend that the Aberdare workmen be advised to return to work as they were recommended by the Executive Council on

November 14th last. That the Council put forth every effort to secure the re-employment of all workmen; and that the members of the Federation who may not secure immediate employment shall be paid strike pay from the central fund.

"After a general discussion, in the course of which many methods were proposed in order to try and secure a satisfactory settlement of the matters in dispute, and many expressions of sympathy were given with the workmen in the Aberdare Valley, it was decided that the whole matter be adjourned to another conference to be held at Cardiff on Wednesday next, and that in the meantime a further sum of £2,000 be sent to the Aberdare Relief Committee."

The action taken at this conference over the Cambrian Combine dispute is discussed in another chapter. It will be noted from the above report that the Council, in the recommendation which they submitted to conference, adhered to the decision of the Conciliation Board in regard to the conditions of resumption of work at the Aberdare collieries, but in courageously taking this unpopular course the members of the Council had to bear the brunt of a great deal of adverse criticism and opposition from delegates who were advocates of the extreme course of a general strike and of national action on the abnormal places question. Whether it was because of this opposition or for some other reason is not clear, but the recommendation was not then put to a vote, and, the Council having previously given way on the matter of financial support, were now unable to resist the pressure of a demand for a further grant. At the adjourned conference, held on December 14th, the recommendation of the Council was carried by 1,815 to 921 votes, and a third grant of £5,000, making in all from the central fund of the Federation a sum of £9,000, was made to the Aberdare Relief Fund. Between the two conferences the Aberdare workmen had met at a mass meeting and had decided to abide by the decision of the conference, butapparently so confident had the more belligerent of the strikers been of the rejection of the recommendation of the Council and of the adoption by conference of stronger measures that the news of the decision of the Cardiff meeting, though received with delight by those who had been intimidated into the strike, produced a sense of deep disappointment among those who had reckoned on a different result, and a mass meeting of the workmen on strike held at Aberdare on the following day broke up in confusion. The recommendation of the Joint Committee at this meeting was that each colliery committee should meet the managers of the collieries, and report to another meeting whether or not they had been able to obtain from them guarantees that all the workmen who could do so would be allowed to resume work. The Cwmaman, Bwllfa and Blaenant workmen,

who had had no dispute with their employers and who had been largely forced into the strike, protested against this course as involving an unnecessary delay in the resumption of work, and as the factions were unable to compose their differences the meeting broke up without having agreed on any common action. The Joint Committee, however, acting independently of the meeting, carried into effect their recommendation. Mr. Stanton sent a telephone message to Mr. Hann intimating the readiness of the workmen to observe the decision of the conference, but asking for a guarantee "that all the men who came out, including yard men, locomotive men, and stokers, would be reinstated and not victimised." He added that unless all the men could return to work none of them would. Replying to this communication Mr. Hann reminded Mr. Stanton of the terms of the resolution of the Conciliation Board of November 14th, and that for some weeks past he must have been aware that it was not the intention of the Company to re-start all the pits and districts. "Your action," Mr. Hann went on to say, "in withdrawing the stokers and others has made it impossible to re-start some, and others are unremunerative. Further, you have not yet complied with the above resolution by promising to abide by the Conciliation Board Agreement in future, and until this is done, and the men required have resumed work, I am precluded from entering into any discussion." From Sir W. T. Lewis, the agent for the Blaenant Colliery of the Marquis of Bute, Mr. Stanton obtained the following reply :—

"Mardy, Aberdare.

"December 15th, 1910.

"As a matter of courtesy to you Sir William has instructed me to acknowledge the receipt of your message and to inform you that when he receives an application from the workmen at the Blaenant Pit to be allowed to resume their respective occupations at that colliery, the question will have his best consideration. As is well-known, there was no dispute between the workmen engaged at the Blaenant Pit and their employer, Lord Bute, but notwithstanding that fact the workmen suspended operations against the protest of their employer's agent, and thus violated their contracts, for the consequences of which, you are aware, the whole of them are liable.

"Sir William is surprised at your suggestion of victimisation, and he has no hesitation in declaring there is no reason for such a suggestion with respect to a single person who was engaged at the colliery at the time the workmen ceased operations.—I am, sir, your obedient servant, E. J. MORRIS."

The late Mr. W. J. Heppell, manager of the Cwmaman Colliery, gave an undertaking that all the men would be allowed to return to work and that there would be no victimisation. Similarly favourable

replies were obtained from the managers of the Bwllfa and the other idle pits, and at all except the Powell Duffryn collieries decisions were arrived at to resume work on the following Monday. The Cwmaman workmen, moreover, not only readily accepted the opportunity of re-starting work, but also expressed their disapproval of the stoppage by passing unanimously, at a meeting held on the afternoon of December 15th, a resolution severing themselves from the Powell Duffryn workmen and Mr. Stanton. In the "P.D." area, however, the letter of Mr. Hann rekindled the smouldering discontent of the strikers, and at a largely attended mass meeting held at Aberdare on December 16th, the following resolution was adopted :—

The Last Hitch.

"That this meeting of the workmen of the Aberdare district expresses its astonishment at the insolent reply given by Mr. E. M. Hann to the request of the Powell Duffryn men to be allowed to return to work as recommended by Wednesday's conference of the miners of the South Wales coalfield ; and, further, places on record its conviction, after reading the reply, that Mr. Hann is determined to keep the men in conditions which have prevailed at his collieries hitherto, together with our determination that these conditions must not be accepted, and that we will stand loyally by the Powell Duffryn men in resisting them.

"We, the Powell Duffryn men, independently express our determination to stand by our agent and our cause, and not to accept the tyrannical conditions sought to be imposed ; and, further, we appeal to the coalfield, in view of the spirit revealed by the letter just received, to realise the urgency of striking a blow once for all for the right to just conditions and for the right to live."

Whatever may have been the degree to which this resolution reflected the passions of the workmen who attended the meeting at which it was adopted, the statements made in it are a travesty of the facts relating to the attitude of Mr. Hann and to the decision of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, and it is not therefore surprising that the action of the "P.D." men in making Mr. Hann's letter a pretext for another appeal for a general strike failed miserably. It drew no response from the general body of the miners in the coalfield. There was a slight recrudesence of disorder in the "P.D." area. On December 19th two workmen in the employ of the Powell Duffryn Company were subjected to ill-treatment, and boycotting and intimidating methods were adopted against others ; but these methods only served to further alienate public sympathy, and at the Aberdare Police Court, on December 21st, the Stipendiary magistrate, Sir Marchant Williams, went so far as to give

expression to this opinion from his seat on the Bench. The back of the strike, however, was now broken. Discouraged by their failure, disorganised by their schisms, and distracted by the sufferings of their families and relatives, the strikers ultimately bowed to the inevitable. At Cardiff, on December 22nd, a deputation of the Powell Duffryn workmen reported to the Executive Council their failure to obtain the required guarantees from Mr. Hann and applied for the support of the Federation in the attitude they had adopted. That attitude was inconsistent with the decision of the conference held at Cardiff on December 7th, and the reply of the Council to this new application was as follows :—

> "That this Council, having heard from the deputation of the Powell Duffryn workmen that they had not gone to work because they considered Mr. Hann's attitude was not in accordance with the spirit of the terms agreed upon by the Conciliation Board on November 4th, and that they anticipated the victimisation of certain workmen if they resumed work in accordance with the decision of the conference, are of opinion that at any time any victimisation will be a distinct violation of the decision of the Conciliation Board, and, therefore, undertakes, after the Powell Duffryn workmen have resumed work, to resist any attempt to victimise any workmen, and to give such workmen the full protection and assistance of the Federation."

The Council, also, at this meeting made a further grant of £2,000—making a total of £11,000 from the central funds—for the relief of the distress in the Aberdare Valley. The Aberdare leaders accepted the recommendation of the Executive, and on the following day proposed an immediate resumption of work. This proposal was opposed by a few remaining recalcitrants, but it was carried by an overwhelming majority, and the following resolution was also adopted :—

> "That we, the 'P.D.' workmen, pledge ourselves that if at any moment it be found that the Powell Duffryn Company are employing any other men than the workmen who were employed at the respective collieries at the time that work ceased, until we are all reinstated, we shall at once ask the permission of the Executive Council to terminate contracts immediately."

Actual resumption of work did not take place till Monday, January 2nd, and then it was only about 3,500 of the nearly 5,500 men who obtained immediate re-employment. The working of some underground places was permanently abandoned by the Company ; and the damage done to other workings was so great that it took nearly

a year's labour to bring them to a proper state of repair. It did not pay the Company to re-open the Treaman Colliery, and in the other pits working places were closed up where 1,300 men had been previously employed. Considerable underground disturbances had also taken place during the strike at the other Aberdare Valley collieries; and on January 10th, on a report that over 1,500 of the strikers were still unemployed, the Executive Council decided to grant lock-out pay to those of the idle workmen who were members of the Federation. Such was the pitiable course and disastrous ending of probably one of the most wanton strikes in the annals of the coalfield. In so far as the associated collieries were concerned the losses due to the estimated non-production of about 600,000 tons were largely minimised if they were not entirely balanced by the indemnities of the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners' Association; but on the workmen the effect of the strike was unqualifiedly disastrous. They gained absolutely nothing. The terms on which they returned to work were the terms offered them on November 14th, and which on several occasions subsequently they were urged to accept by the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation. The line of action followed by the owners was not only consistent with the obligations imposed by the Agreement, but imperative as much in the best interests of the body constituted to control the mutual relations of the employers and the workmen as in those of the coalowners in their capacities as employers of labour. It asserted and maintained the authority of the Conciliation Board in matters of dispute, and by accepting the proposal of the owners' representatives at the meeting of the Conciliation Board held on November 14th the workmen's representatives virtually gave their assent to the line of action adopted by the coalowners. How far the vacillation of the Executive Council of the Federation in the conduct of this dispute was responsible for the continuance of so hopeless a struggle for so long a period is a difficult matter to settle. Much though the members of that body might have sympathised with the alleged grievances, they found it impossible to defend the illegal and unconstitutional way by which the Aberdare workmen attempted to remedy those grievances, and by the rules of their own organisation they were prevented from extending regular strike-pay support to members engaged in so completely unauthorised a stoppage. Had the Executive persisted in the firm attitude adopted in the earlier stages of the trouble it is conceivable that the struggle would have proved one of much shorter duration. That early attitude involved the refusal of a general conference and the denial of any form of financial support; but on both these important points the Executive ultimately gave way. Under the pressure, in the first

Failure and Cost of the Strike.

instance, of the joint action of the Cambrian Combine and the Aberdare Valley strikers, and afterwards of the general conference, they temporised. The two courses open to them were to resign in the event of the defeat of the policy they had originally mapped out, or to yield gradually to current opinion and circumstances. Though it involved the virtual breakdown of the constitution of the Federation and the official countenance of an illegal stoppage, the choice of the Executive went in favour of the latter course. Expediency obtained the upper hand over consistency, and as latter-day trade union government is based on the theory of a delegated and not a representative authority the choice of the Executive was defended on that ground. Still, the fact remains that the Executive surrendered the position they had originally taken up, and that not only was a portion of the money given in relief grants eventually distributed among the men on strike, but that also the Federation was committed to definite financial support in the form of regular lock-out pay to those of the Powell Dyffryn workmen who, in consequence of the abandonment of unremunerative working places, were unable to obtain re-employment under the Company.

The duration of the stoppages in the Aberdare Valley were as follows :—The Powell Duffryn pits, from October 20th to January 2nd—a period of 10 weeks, 4 days ; the Bwllfa, Windber, Dullas and Cwmaman pits, from November 5th to December 19th—a period of 6 weeks, 2 days ; the Blaenant Colliery, from November 11th to December 19th—a period of 6 weeks, 1 day. In wages alone these stoppages are estimated to have involved an immediate loss to the workmen of £220,000. The indirect losses cannot very well be stated ; but some of them may be indicated. As few of the men had saved any money, they had to depend for food and shelter partly on the charity of relief funds and partly on the credit of the local shopkeepers and the landlords, and if the rent arrears are averaged at 5/- a week, and it is assumed the credit given by the tradesmen averaged 5/- per household, the accumulated debts under these heads must have amounted to at least £20,000. Then, again, the Federation, in addition to the loss of the regular contributions of its members in the Aberdare Valley, devoted £11,000 from its Central Fund to the relief of the distress of those members. That distress was acute and widespread ; it was necessarily the greatest and the worst of the evils which the strike brought in its trail, and the history of that suffering is not written in words or expressed in figures.

CHAPTER VII.

CAMBRIAN NEGOCIATIONS (FIRST STAGE).

The Cambrian Negociations.—A '98 Parallel.—Board of Trade Mediation.—Message from Mr. Lloyd George.—Workmen's Representatives suggest New Terms, which the Coalowners Reject.—A Miners' Conference advocates national action for an Abnormal-Places Minimum Wage.—Negociations between Naval Company and Naval Colliery Workmen's representatives.—An Offer and a Counter-Offer.—A dramatic Personal Incident.—Mr. G. R. Askwith's difficult and thankless task.—Workmen withhold plenary powers.—Report on the negociations.—Mr. Askwith rebuffed by the Strikers.—Mr. D. A. Thomas gives assurances that the Naval Company do not desire to reduce the general level of Wages.—The mid-Rhondda Strikers receive national support.—National Conference decision on Abnormal Places.—Board of Trade suggest a Ballot on the terms of October 22nd, supplemented by Mr. Thomas's assurances.—A Joint Conference on those assurances.—Had they any fixed money value ?—A clear explanation of their purpose.—They are further supplemented by a new undertaking given by Mr. Leonard Llewelyn.—Mr. Llewelyn's undertaking disapproved by the Coalowners' Association.—Workmen's New Proposals.—They are again Rejected by the Naval Company.—Mr. T. J. Callaghan's letter to Mr. Askwith.—Arbitration Refused.—The Ballot of March 25th.—Impressions of Mr. W. E. Harvey and Mr. T. Ashton.—"Anarchy and Red Riot."—Miners' Passive Revolt against Strike Levies.—M.F.G.B. propose modified form of Arbitration.—Negociations between M.F.G.B. Representatives and Coalowners result in the Settlement of May 15th.—The New Terms of Settlement.—Comparison with previous proposed Terms.

A '98 Parallel.

It is doubtful if peace negociations in any other industrial dispute in the history of the country were carried forward amid so many difficulties as those in the dispute at the collieries under the control of the Cambrian Combine. As was the case in the great strike of 1898, those difficulties arose mainly from the absence on the men's side of a representative body with whom the Coalowners' Association or the Board of Trade could negociate and whose authority was sufficiently strong to compel the acceptance by the workmen of its decisions. Reporting to Mr. Ritchie, President of the Board of Trade, on the results of his mission as a conciliator in 1898, Sir Edward Fry wrote :—" The Provisional Committee had no settled policy and did not know their own minds. They could not give me the information I sought to enable me to form an opinion ; and even when I did advise them on a particular course they acted in a contrary way, and defeated the precise object which

my counsel aimed at." That and much more might be written on the conduct of the workmen's representatives in the Cambrian struggle. The Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation retained nominal control of affairs. Its leading members were not personally superseded as, to some extent, were Mabon and his principal confreres on the Sliding Committee in '98. But after November 1910 the control which the Council exercised was purely nominal. Real power was in the hands of the Cambrian Combine Joint Committee. The Executive Council during the greater period of the strike did little more than register the decisions of that Committee, and as those decisions were influenced by motives and aims directed as much against the Council itself as against the settlement of the dispute on the lines of the Mabon-Davis settlement of October 22nd, they led to bitter internecine feuds in the ranks of the Federation, to a constant shifting of ground on the part of the Council as well as by the strikers, to an abandonment by Mr. Askwith of his mediatory services, and in the end to an open conflict between the South Wales Miners' Federation and the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

Peace Influences.

The earlier phase of the Board of Trade intervention opened, as we have already seen, with the interviews between Mr. Askwith and the strike leaders in London on November 8th and 9th. On November 12th Mr. Askwith met the representatives of the idle collieries at Cardiff; and then followed further conversations with workmen's representatives on November 22nd and 23rd, and with Mr. F. L. Davis (chairman of the coalowners' side on the Conciliation Board), Mr. D. A. Thomas, and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, on November 29th and 30th. In these conferences Mr. Askwith was placed in possession of the facts of the case.* His immediate purpose was to bring the principal parties to the dispute together, and in that well-intentioned effort he received active assistance from the ministers and clergy as well as from the magistrates of the district. Mr. Lloyd George, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who in the last few days of November was touring through mid-Wales in support of the candidature of Liberal candidates in the General Election then in progress, lent the aid of his personality to the peace

*NOTE.—Mr. T. Smith submitted to him a statement of grievances from which it was alleged the workmen at the Naval Colliery had suffered since the property had come under the management of the Cambrian Combine. These grievances applied to abnormal places, timbering, interferences with price-lists, the breaking of verbal agreements, and other matters—all of which, it was stated, made the chances of earning a livelihood less and less—but in his statement to Mr. Askwith Mr. Smith explained that the reason why these grievances were not advanced in the previous negociations was that those negociations concerned a price-list on a seam "where these grievances did not exist."

movement, and on December 1st, at the request of a representative of the "South Wales Daily News," sent a message to the strikers in which he said :—

> "The only thing I am permitted to do without any suspicion of intruding into an affair which is not my own, is to make an earnest appeal to my fellow-countrymen in the Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys not to be guilty of any breach of the peace, for that does them very much harm in prejudicing their cause with the people outside who know nothing about the merits of the dispute.
>
> "I beg of them not merely in their own interests but for the fame of their native land to exercise restraint.
>
> "Strikes in the past in our country, whilst conducted with all resolution and courage and skill have been very free from any scenes of turbulence and riot.
>
> "With a small nation like ours there are always people ready to exaggerate our smallest defects and to ignore our greatest qualities."

The local conditions, however, rendered the achievement of that purpose exceedingly difficult. In the strike areas the workmen, though at the moment less aggressive than they had been in the pursuit of their career of heedless violence, were in fierce conflict with the official leaders; the South Wales Miners' Federation, instead of concentrating its energies towards localising the dispute and taking firm measures against the excesses and insubordination of its members, was dissipating its forces in distracting quarrels over the suggested extension of a strike throughout the whole coalfield on the abnormal places and lower paid workmen as well as on the issues which had led to the sectional stoppages; while at that time also the representatives of the Cambrian Combine collieries were strongly of the opinion that Government intervention was not only premature but might prove mischievous.

Negociations Resumed.

At a meeting of the Conciliation Board. held at the request of the workmen on December 5th, the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation showed that it had moved a long way in the direction of the adaptation of its policy to the conflicting views of its members. It suggested to the owners' representatives that they should agree to a resumption of work by all the workmen except those employed in the seams where the disputes existed, and that a fresh enquiry should be made into each of those disputes. This suggestion—which not only ignored the fact that the stoppage at the Cambrian Combine collieries had been the result of the notices served by the workmen and authorised by the Federation itself, but which also implied a demand that the owners should abandon its own ground and fight the issues involved on that chosen

for them by the workmen—was rejected without hesitation, and Mr. F. L. Davis added that the workmen in the Upper Five Feet Seam at the Naval Colliery Ely Pit must return to work upon the terms of the award of himself and Mabon. Two or three days later, too, it became clear that even if the suggestion had been accepted by the owners the workmen's representatives could not have guaranteed either its approval by the mid-Rhondda strikers or the acceptance by the latter of any new award that might have followed the proposed new enquiry. Those strikers had previously repudiated the authority of the Conciliation Board. They now made it known that they had withdrawn plenary powers from their representatives on that Board, and that they were determined to carry on the fight in their own way. Thus it was that at a conference of the whole coalfield held two days' later the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, in spite of the fact that the Ely Pit dispute had been constitutionally settled, that both Mabon and Mr. Watts Morgan had described the terms as representing a fair settlement, and that the representatives of the Naval workmen had made no protest against the formal signatory acceptance of those terms by Mabon on their behalf, submitted the following recommendation :

> " That having failed to secure a satisfactory settlement of the dispute at the Cambrian collieries, the Federation members be urged to pay their levies promptly in support of the workmen at these collieries, and that an appeal be made to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain to render assistance in fighting this battle."

This resolution was not adopted till December 14th. It provoked an animated and acrimonious discussion, in which the delegates from the strike districts condemned sectional stoppages and fought hard for a general strike policy, or failing that, national action on the abnormal places question ; but the conference was adjourned for a week, when the recommendation of the Council was adopted with the following supplementary resolution :—" That it be a recommendation to the districts comprising the South Wales Miners' Federation to send representatives to the national conference to be called on the abnormal places question."

In spite, however, of the difficulties and complexities of the local situation, Mr. Askwith persisted in his task, and on December 9th and 10th meetings were held in his presence at Cardiff between representatives of the Naval Company and of the Naval workmen, Mr. F. L. Davis presiding over the employers' side and Mabon over the workmen's representatives. No material progress in the direction of peace was made at these meetings. The differences between the parties affected not only the details of the terms of October 22nd, but also one or two vital points of principle. It was authoritatively

communicated to the representatives of the Naval Company that the members of the Naval Committee present had no power to conclude a binding settlement, and that they could not guarantee to the owners' representatives the acceptance by the strikers of even a provisional settlement. Their powers were restricted to that of report. With these formidable obstacles in the way there could be no peace ; and the parties separated in order to allow the workmen's representatives to act upon a suggestion made by Mr. Askwith that they should endeavour to obtain full powers to settle.

An Offer and a Counter Offer.

The respective offer and counter offer made at these meetings were as follows :—

Terms offered by Mr. F. L. Davis at a meeting with the workmen and Board of Trade in Cardiff, December 10th, 1910 :—

Owners' Offer.

That both parties agree to give the price-list arranged on October 22nd a fair trial for twelve months, the list to continue in force thereafter subject to one month's notice on either side.

The management and workmen's committee jointly deprecate the use of objectionable or violent language by any official or workman and will use their best efforts to put a stop to it. (Accepted by the workmen).

Workmen's Counter Offer.

That we unanimously agree to recommend the workmen to accept the terms of settlement arranged on the 22nd of October last on trial for twelve months provided that in the working places where colliers cannot earn the rate of wages paid in the disputed seam before the stoppage they shall be made up to that amount.

Seeds were sown during these negociations, however, which were destined to bear fruit later on, and the meeting of December 10th deserves further notice on this account, as well as because of a highly dramatic personal incident with which it ended. In the course of the discussion the workmen's representatives emphasised the fact that one of their principal objections to the October settlement was that it had no bottom in the sense of a wage limit under working conditions when the colliers failed to make up their average earnings on the price-list. This grievance drew from Mr. D. A. Thomas the declaration that though strongly opposed to the establishment at the colliery of an undiscriminating fixed minimum wage for all colliers, yet he would assure the workmen's representatives that he had no desire or intention to reduce the average wages at the Naval Colliery. Mr. Askwith immediately

Dramatic Personal Incident.

seized on this assurance ; to his trained mind it seemed to open a way out of the impasse; and at his personal request Mr. Thomas repeated the statement. It received also the deep attention of the workmen's committee ; and for the moment hopes were raised that the declaration would pave the way to a speedy settlement. It had been made just before the parties separated for luncheon ; and one of the workmen's representatives when interviewed during the luncheon interval, described the situation as more hopeful. It was a ray of sunshine, unfortunately, that was soon dispelled. The clouds of distrust and suspicion which had overhung the previous proceedings thickened again, and when the parties met after luncheon it was unexpectedly intimated to the representatives of the Naval Company that Mr. Thomas's declaration was not acceptable as a basis of settlement. It was too indefinite ; Mabon is said to have declared there was nothing of value in it. Mr. Thomas pressed Mabon to say in what particular the assurance lacked definiteness, so that he might be in a position to amend it ; but Mabon merely repeated that it was of no value. A brief but very sharp passage of arms ensued between the veteran miners' leader and Mr. D. A. Thomas, and at one moment it was feared that the conference would have abruptly ended in a storm of passion.

It will be seen it was not a path of roses that Mr. Askwith had taken when he intervened in the dispute. Though discouraged by the steep, thorny, and tortuous ways of the dispute, he did not give up hope, and on December 20th, at his request, three members of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation—T. Richards, M.P., Mr. Alfred Onions, and Mr. D. Watts Morgan—waited on the Naval Colliery workmen's committee at Penygraig and urged them to grant plenary powers to the deputation from the committee which was to meet the owners' representatives at Cardiff the following day. The workmen declined to grant such powers, and in consequence of this refusal the negociations suspended on December 10th were abortive, and the adjourned conference at Cardiff on December 21st was a purely formal affair. Mabon was not present at this meeting. His place in the chair on the workmen's side was taken by Mr. Alfred Onions, and the other workmen's representatives in attendance were Mr. T. Richards, Mr. Enoch Morrell, Mr. W. H. Morgan, and twelve members of the Naval Committee ; while on the owners, side there were present Mr. F. L. Davis (chairman), Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn. The parties were not long together, and the official report of the negociations was in the following terms :—

Workmen Refuse Plenary Powers.

" The position between the parties was that the Naval Colliery workmen had declined to adopt the terms which had been

agreed upon by Mr. Fred. L. Davis and Mr. W. Abraham, M.P., and Mr. Watts Morgan, the miners' agent, on the 22nd of October last in settlement of the dispute, although those terms had been recommended to the workmen by Mr. Abraham and Mr. Watts Morgan as being, in their opinion, a fair settlement of the question in dispute.

"Finding that the Naval Colliery's workmen had no authority at the meeting of the 10th inst. to agree to any settlement which may have resulted at that meeting, as they insisted on the condition that any terms of settlement must be submitted to the Naval workmen for approval before adoption, Mr. Askwith had then suggested as a possible way out of the deadlock that the Naval Colliery workmen should entrust their committee with power to arrive at settlement.

"Messrs. Richards and Onions said that they had urged the Naval workmen to agree to Mr. Askwith's suggestion, but unsuccessfully. Mr. Davis contended that the following of such a course as the adoption of the condition proposed by the Naval Colliery workmen's committee would be striking at the root of the whole foundation of the Conciliation Board Agreement, and would be doing away with the essential principle of collective bargaining between the employers and the workmen's representatives on behalf of the parties they represent, namely, the general body of the owners and the workmen. This being a primary condition to be observed if the Conciliation Board Agreement is to be upheld, he could not be a party to a departure from that fundamental principle.

"Mr. Davis pointed out that the workmen's representatives had themselves been strong advocates of the principle for some years past. Mr. Davis reminded the Naval workmen's committee that a settlement already arrived at by Mabon and himself had been repudiated by the Naval workmen, and that he must insist on some guarantee being forthcoming that any terms which may be found to be acceptable by any representatives appointed by the Naval workmen and others appointed by the owners' representatives on the Conciliation Board would be adopted, and the only guarantee is for the Naval workmen to give their representatives the authority which has hitherto been withheld.

"Mr. Davis strongly urged that the adoption of a new principle of submitting any terms to the general body of the workmen for approval would render the whole Conciliation Board Agreement inoperative, as it would result in no

settlement of disputes ever being arrived at. Finally, Mr. Davis intimated that if any further negociations are to take place upon this matter the Naval Colliery men must entrust their representatives, whomsoever they may be, with absolute authority, this being a condition precedent to any further meeting.

"The meeting then concluded in order that Mr. Askwith might confer with the workmen's representatives and the Naval workmen's committee upon the position."

Strikers Disagree over Plenary Powers.

It will be noted in this report that the negociations, in so far as they concerned the workmen, were carried on with the representatives of the Naval Colliery workmen. The executive authority of the men on strike was a joint committee representing all the collieries under the control of the Cambrian Combine; but the Naval Colliery Company declined to negociate with any other representatives than those of the Naval Colliery on the ground that that was the only colliery where a dispute existed, and that the other collieries were owned by separate Companies; and although members of the general committee were present at the Engineers' Institute during the meetings arranged by Mr. Askwith they were there simply for consultative purposes. On December 22nd Mr. Askwith met the whole committee at Tonypandy, and brought to bear all his skill and conciliatory power in an effort to persuade the men to grant to their negociating representatives plenary powers. His efforts met with no greater success here than they had done at the conferences with the owners, and the official report of this meeting was confined to the statement that "the meeting stand adjourned pending any further communications which would probably be made from both sides with the view of continuing the negociations." This rebuff was immediately responsible for the temporary suspension of the active mediation of Mr. Askwith. Local pressure, however, was brought to bear on the strikers by some of the leading members of the Cambrian Joint Committee, who pointed out that in the end the men would be compelled to abandon the untenable position they had taken up, and hopes were entertained in official circles that the plenary power difficulty would be removed and the negociations resumed along regular lines. Again the event falsified the promise, for at the meeting of the Naval workmen, held at Tonypandy on December 30th, the resolution adopted was in the following terms:—

"To grant the deputation plenary powers in any further negociations, provided that the wages of the men working on the disputed seam did not go below 5/- per day plus percentages in any terms which might be arrived at, but

that in the absence of such a clause the men adhere to their original demand of 2/6 per ton."

What the workmen gave way in this resolution with one hand, they took back with the other, and by imposing the alternative conditions of a minimum day wage or a minimum price-list of 2/6 per ton for the disputed seam they made negociations more difficult than ever. The demand for a price of 2/6 per ton ignored completely the settlement of October 22nd, while the instruction to insist on the alternative condition for what was virtually a demand for a guaranteed minimum wage of 6/9 per day on the disputed seam introduced a new factor and violated the Wages Agreement. There was dissension, however, among the general body of the Cambrian Combine workmen as to the extent of the conditions to be attached to the powers of their representatives. At a meeting of the Glamorgan Colliery workmen held on December 31st the only condition imposed was that any terms arranged by their representatives should be subject to approval by the workmen as a whole, but at a joint meeting of all the strikers, held at Gilfach Goch on January 1st, the men failed to reconcile their differences, and the meeting broke up in confusion. A week later it was announced that the workmen who had opposed plenary powers had given way, but the hopes of the strikers were now centred in the conference of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain which had been fixed for January 24th, and they showed no desire to re-open negociations till they had ascertained the attitude of the M.F.G.B.

Mr. Askwith and Mr. D. A. Thomas' Assurances.

Meanwhile, Mr. Isaac Mitchell was in South Wales watching events on behalf of the Board of Trade, and on the strength of a report from him Mr. Askwith, on January 10th, wrote the following letter to Mr. D. A. Thomas :—

"My opinion is that the best course to be pursued now will be that you should develop and indicate in writing the assurances you may be prepared to give with respect to the men upon any resumption of work in these particular collieries. Such assurances of fair treatment would, I think, be of great value in allaying the anxiety of the men now out of work, and be in keeping with the intentions you have from time to time verbally stated to me. Your personal action in this respect cannot but have great influence in restoring or causing confidence. I may also add that I am sure that you would not endorse any prejudicial action against individuals for any part taken by them in the existing disputes, but I think it would be advisable that you should formally state that you will undertake that no such action will be allowed when work is resumed."

On January 13th, Mr. Thomas replied to Mr. Askwith :—

"I took the opportunity afforded yesterday by the monthly meeting of the Naval Colliery Board to consult my colleagues in reference to your suggestion of assurances that might be given by the directors to the workmen in the event of a resumption of work. The question of a guaranteed wage could only be dealt with by the Conciliation Board for the coalfield as a whole, and it is not a question peculiarly affecting the Naval collieries. Consequently, it is not within the competence of my Board as such to deal with it. I am, however, in a position to give you, on behalf of the directors of the Naval collieries and myself, a definite assurance that we have no desire or intention to reduce the general level of wages at the Naval collieries, while we would readily give our undertaking to supplement low wages by allowances, as is customary throughout the coalfield, where such are caused by difficulties in the working-place, so as to enable fair wages to be made.

"These assurances, you may take it, will, if necessary, be given by the Cambrian, Glamorgan, and Britannia Companies respectively. No prejudicial action has ever to my knowledge been taken in any collieries with which I have been associated against individuals in the case of past disputes, and neither Mr. Leonard Llewelyn nor myself will be influenced by any part taken by individual strikers when work is resumed after the present dispute."

On January 20th, Mr. Askwith forwarded copies of this correspondence to Mr. Thos. Richards, M.P., with the following covering letter:—

"Board of Trade.

"Jan. 20th, 1911.

"Dear Sir,—In view of the fact that matters connected with the South Wales coal mining dispute are to be discussed at a meeting of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain on Tuesday next, I think it desirable that you should be in possession of information as to the latest developments resulting from the negociations which I have been conducting, in order that that information may, if you think fit, be communicated to your colleagues.

"As you are aware, following the meetings which have taken place at which I have been present, these negociations have taken the line of communicating with the owners on the question of 'assurances.' I wrote to Mr. D. A. Thomas on January 10th, and I enclose a copy of my letter, together with a copy of the reply which Mr. Thomas has sent to me.

"I should add that these assurances do not affect the previous undertaking that the price-list arranged in October should be given a provisional trial for a period of twelve months.—Yours faithfully, G. R. ASKWITH."

M.F.G.B. Grant Financial Support.

On January 21st the Conciliation Board met at Cardiff. The Cambrian dispute was not discussed at this meeting, but an application was made by the workmen for the appointment of a small committee to consider the abnormal places' question. The coalowners' representatives declined to agree to the application, and reminded the workmen's representatives that this was one of the demands which had been withdrawn by them when the new agreement was signed in April, 1910. This was the last of the meetings of the Board attended by Mr. D. A. Thomas prior to his departure from this country on a three months' tour to South America. On the eve of his departure Mr. Thomas supplied a series of articles to the "Western Mail," in the course of which he discussed every phase of the dispute. Mr. T. Smith replied to them on behalf of the Strike Committee.

At the conference of the M.F.G.B., which opened in London on January 24th, the two chief questions discussed were the Cambrian dispute and the abnormal places problem. Several of the delegates from South Wales pressed for national action on both these matters, but the conference opinion was overwhelmingly opposed to such an extreme course, and the resolutions adopted were in the following terms :—

Cambrian Combine Dispute.

"That the Miners' Federation contribute to the South Wales Federation the sum of £3,000 per week, to be raised by a levy of 3d. per week by the members of the Federation of Great Britain, the same to be paid to Mr. Ashton, the general secretary, and made payable to Mr. Abraham, the general treasurer, of the Federation. This is for the purpose of assisting the South Wales Federation to pay its members who are out in accordance with rule. That a statement be got out in circular form and forwarded to the district councils giving particulars of the dispute ; and that Mr. Harvey, M.P., and Mr. Ashton render additional possible assistance to the South Wales deputation in bringing about a settlement of the dispute."

Abnormal Places Problem.

"That in order to carry out the resolutions passed at the annual conference held in Edinburgh in October last it be an instruction of this conference to all districts in the Federation to press for the average or minimum rate of wages, whichever is in operation, to apply to all workmen engaged in working in abnormal places or under abnormal conditions ; and should any district fail at the end of three months from this date to obtain this, the members of the

Federation be recommended to consider the advisability of taking national action to enforce this; and that a conference be called by the president and secretary at the expiration of this term to receive reports upon this resolution, and then decide what action shall be taken."

The conference also passed resolutions instructing the districts to collect information as to the wages paid to day wage workmen and authorising the secretary and the president to call a special conference to consider the question when the information had been obtained; and also recommended the South Wales miners to increase their rate of contributions to the Federation from 3d. to 6d. per week in order to establish a uniform rate in all the districts affiliated to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. The melancholy fact may here be stated that three of the members of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, viz., W. H. Morgan, T. Harries, and T. George, while on their way to London to attend this conference, were killed in the Taff Vale Railway collision, which took place at Hopkinstown at about 10 o'clock on Monday morning, January 23rd. Their deaths entirely deprived the Rhondda district of any representation on the Executive Council and the Conciliation Board. The fourth member, Councillor T. Evans, had previously resigned. The vacancies were subsequently filled by T. Smith, John Hopla, and Noah Rees (members of the Strike Committee), and Noah Ablett (Mardy), all of whom were Socialists and had throughout the strike been identified with the extreme party.

Immediately after the conference Mr. T. Richards, M.P., the secretary of the South Wales Miners' Federation, entered into oral communication with Mr. G. R. Askwith, and on January 27th Mr. Askwith addressed Mr. Richards the following letter:—

"Board of Trade,
"Jan. 27th, 1911.

Board of Trade Suggest a Ballot.

"Dear Sir,—I shall be glad to receive the miners' representatives, namely, Messrs. W. E. Harvey, M.P., and T. Ashton, of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain; Mr. Onions and yourself, of the South Wales Miners' Federation; and Messrs. Smith Jones, and Morgan, from the Rhondda district, on Wednesday next, after the meeting at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and to have a discussion with you upon the present position in the Rhondda Valley.

"I think it may be useful, if in sending you further copies of the correspondence between myself and Mr. D. A. Thomas, I should explain in writing the developments which have occurred since I visited Tonypandy on the 22nd of December.

"At the meeting held on that date it was apparent that there was considerable division of opinion as to the desirability of giving plenary powers to any set of representatives and as to the representatives who might be entrusted with the task of exercising such power. In view of this information, I thought it would be extremely difficult for any man to act freely in such a position, and that it was advisable for me to ascertain how far the owners of the collieries in question were finally prepared to go. With this object I opened up further negotiations with Mr. D. A. Thomas, the result of which is contained in the letters I annex. (Note.—The letters here referred to are those already given above).

"I may add that, having closely followed the effects and variations of the difficulties which have arisen during the course of this long dispute, and having seen how the real issues have travelled very far away from the reasons which originally led to the first lock-out and the service of notices, I may, perhaps, be allowed to suggest that the opinion of the men should now be taken upon the present position as set forth in the correspondence. That position is that Mr. D. A. Thomas offers definite assurances which are very clearly stated by him in his letter.

"Your council may consider that it will be desirable to obtain a vote of the men upon the present issue, and in that event I should be very pleased to give all the information in my power to you or to the men in order that the present position may be fully understood.—Yours very faithfully, G. R. ASKWITH.

"Thomas Richards, Esq., M.P."

This letter was considered at a meeting of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation on February 3rd, and the same day Mr. Richards addressed the following communication to Mr. Askwith:

"South Wales Miners' Federation,
"Royal Chambers, Cardiff.
"February 3rd, 1911.

"Cambrian Combine Collieries.

"Dear Sir,—At a meeting of my Council to-day in Cardiff, attended by the deputation of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain—Messrs. W. E. Harvey, M.P., and T. Ashton (general secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain)—your favour of the 27th January, 1911, and the correspondence enclosed that has taken place between you and Mr. D. A. Thomas, was carefully considered, when it was resolved that I should ask you to kindly continue your good services in this matter in arranging for the representatives of the Naval Colliery Board to meet the representatives of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain—Messrs. W. E. Harvey, M.P., and T. Ashton—

and the representatives of our council, with the district miner's agents and a deputation of the workmen, for the purpose of securing a definite and clear understanding as to what is meant by the assurances given in the letter of Mr. D. A. Thomas of January 13th, 1911, 'that there was no desire to reduce the general level of wages,' and 'the undertaking to supplement low wages by allowances.'

"I shall be glad to hear that you will be able to accede to this request, and that the meeting can be arranged.—Yours faithfully, THOMAS RICHARDS.

"G. R. Askwith, Esq."

Joint Conference on Mr. Thomas' Assurances.

The meeting suggested in this letter was held at Cardiff, on Saturday, February 11th. Mr. D. A. Thomas, the chairman of the Naval Company, who had left England for South America, on Friday, February 4th, was represented by Mr. T. J. Callaghan, one of his fellow directors on the Naval Board, and the official report of the meeting was supplied to the Press in the following terms by Mr. G. R. Askwith, K.C. :—

"A meeting was held at the Engineers' Institute, Cardiff, this morning, Mr. G. R. Askwith in the chair. There were present Mr. W. Brace, M.P., Mr. Thomas Richards, M.P., Mr. Onions, Mr. Watts Morgan, and a large number of representatives of the Naval Collieries, Rhondda Valley, on behalf of the men; and Mr. T. J. Callaghan, Mr. Leonard Llewelyn, and other representatives of the board of the Naval Colliery on behalf of the Company. Mr. W. E. Harvey, M.P., and Mr. T. Ashton represented the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

"Mr. Askwith commenced by stating that this was not a meeting of the Conciliation Board parties, but was between the owners and representatives of the men, who had been summoned by the Board of Trade in response to an invitation which he had received in order to show the position subsequent to the meeting before Christmas. He read the correspondence which had taken place with Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. T. Richards, and then asked Mr. Brace to continue the discussion.

"After consideration of the questions for three hours certain explanations were put into writing and countersigned by the chairman (Mr. Askwith) as the outcome of the meeting. They were as follows :—

"Upon questions being asked with reference to assurances proposed by Mr. D. A. Thomas, it was stated by Mr. Llewelyn that, as regards the new seam in the Ely Pit, alike in cases where a man is in an abnormal place or is wanting allowances, those allowances will be settled

between the manager and the particular man, but Mr. Llewelyn said :—

"'If the men throughout the seam are not satisfied with the wages which they earn, whether the place is normal or abnormal, I will take the matter in hand myself, and let the miners' agents come down and settle the matter with me in the place itself. Where we find that the man has done a fair day's work I will pay him a fair day's wage.'

"Any such agreement shall be made in writing. He added he had no objection to seeing that the same procedure would apply in other pits in the Naval collieries by the managers of those pits meeting the miners' agents. He agreed that any bargain arrived at between any managers and the men would be accepted as final.

"At a subsequent meeting, in reference to the Cambrian, Glamorgan, and Britannic collieries, Mr. Brace asked Mr. Llewelyn whether he could say if the miners' agents could arrange with the managers in those collieries in the same manner as was proposed for the Naval collieries, and was informed by Mr. Llewelyn that the same procedure would be followed."

Had the Assurance any Money Value ?

The correspondence and official statement here given in extenso call for little in the way of comment; but in view of difficulties raised at a later stage it is desirable to supplement Mr. Askwith's report with one or two excerpts from the notes of the meeting of February 11th. The main point of the letter addressed by Mr. Askwith to Mr. Richards on January 27th was that suggesting a ballot of the strikers on the new situation created by Mr. Thomas's assurances—which assurances, by the way, were in effect what Mr. Thomas had offered at the meeting with the representatives of the Naval workmen on December 10th. In the reply of Mr. Richards of February 3rd no reference is made to this suggestion ; instead, a request is made to Mr. Askwith to use his good offices to bring about another interview with the Naval Colliery Board "for the purpose of securing a definite and clear understanding as to what is meant by the assurances that 'there was no desire to reduce the general level of wages' and 'the undertaking to supplement low wages by allowances.'" It will be seen from the terms of Mr. Askwith's report of the meeting of February 11th that in addition to an undertaking to pay a fair day's wage for a fair day's work the management of the Naval Company committed itself to a system of conciliation which provided for the settlement of allowances in the disputed seam at the Ely Pit in the first place between the workman and the local colliery manager ; in the second place,

failing agreement between the workman and the local colliery manager, then by negociation between the workman and the general manager; and in the third place, failing agreement by either of those two methods, by negociation between the general manager and the miners' agent, who "shall come down and settle the matter with me (Mr. Llewelyn) in the place itself." The Company went further. They agreed to the application of the procedure (allowing colliery managers to settle with miners' agents) to the other pits under the control of the Combine, but the terms of the Askwith statement do not in any sense state that the assurances were intended to commit the Company to the payment of any definite wage to men employed in abnormal places. The following excerpts from a transcript of the notes of the proceedings (kindly supplied by Mr. D. A. Thomas) seem to make this point unmistakably clear :—

"Mr. Brace: Is there any money value in the assurances?

"Mr. Callaghan: It is an assurance of good faith and the Company cannot carry it any further.

"Mr. Brace: The assurances do not therefore mean any money value.

"Mr. Callaghan: The Company cannot agree to any figure.

"Mr. Brace: All the assurances mean, then, is that the Company do not intend to interfere with things by reducing anything.

"Mr. Callaghan: That is so; it is an assurance of good faith. The Company do not propose to reduce prices or not make up wages in abnormal places.

At an earlier stage of the proceedings Mr. Brace asked: Supposing the average wage in the past has been 7/6 per day and when the new price-list is tried and the man earns below 7/6, would the Company make the man up to 7/6?

"Mr. Llewelyn: That is not the intention at all.

"Mr. Brace: Am I right in assuming that the assurances mean that if there is a fall in a man's wages below the past average of say 7/6 that the man is to be made up to that amount?

"Mr. Llewelyn: There is no doubt that it does not mean that. The Company cannot agree to a minimum wage, and the Company cannot give the men what they are now asking for. Where a man has an abnormal place and cannot earn his wages on the list the Company will assist him by giving allowances, but the Company cannot agree to any standard wage as it is out of their hands. It is not the intention of the Company to reduce the general earnings of the men. . . . . Every case will be dealt with on its own merits."

The memorandum given in Mr. Askwith's statement was prepared

during the luncheon hour, and when on the resumption of the proceedings it was submitted to the conference—

> "Mr. Brace asked Mr. Llewelyn what figure he had in his mind for a fair wage.
>
> "Mr. Llewelyn: It depends entirely upon the man and the place. I am not going to state any amount. . . . It is a matter of mutual arrangement between the owners and the workmen.
>
> "Mr. Brace: If these terms are not accepted the stoppage must continue.
>
> "Mr. T. Richards: The present offer will have to be submitted to the men's Council."

Coalowners Disapprove Mr. Llewelyn's Offer.

The results of this conference led to one or two important results, and, in the case of the workmen, were responsible for an entirely new and embarassing development. On the side of the owners they created a feeling of uneasiness as to the extent to which the policy of the owners as a whole had been compromised, and at a meeting of colliery owners, held at Cardiff, on Wednesday, February 15th, the action of Mr. Leonard Llewelyn and the Naval Company, in committing themselves to the extent they had done in the memorandum which had been countersigned by Mr. Askwith, was condemned by several members, and a resolution was passed disapproving the arrangements offered by Mr. Llewelyn in regard to the settlement of disputes concerning allowances and abnormal places. Mr. Callaghan protested against the resolution, and pointed out that the explanations made by Mr. Llewelyn had been previously sanctioned by both Mr. F. L. Davis, the chairman of the owners' side on the Conciliation Board, and by Mr. Joseph Shaw, the president of the South Wales Coalowners' Association. At a meeting of the owners held on February 24th the condemnatory resolution was withdrawn.

Workmen's New Proposals.

The results of the conference on the attitude of the South Wales Miners' Federation, however, were still more decisive. With the owners the dissatisfaction was domestic, and was completely allayed by the explanations given by Mr. Llewelyn, but on the workmen's side they led to a complete volte face.

The Executive Council met at Cardiff on Thursday, February 16th. For this meeting, which was attended by Mr. Harvey and Mr. Ashton, Mr. T. Richards, M.P., the general secretary, prepared for the use of the members a printed statement giving Mr. D. A. Thomas's letter, dated January 13th, to Mr. Askwith, the statement given by Mr. Llewelyn and countersigned by Mr. Askwith at the meeting of the parties on February 11th in reference to the "assurances," and the following proposed terms of settlement :—

"(1) That both parties agree to give the price-list arranged on October 22nd, 1910, a fair trial for twelve months, the list to continue in force hereafter, subject to one month's notice on either side.

"(2) The management and workmen's committee jointly deprecate the use of objectionable or violent language by an official or workman, and will use their best efforts to put a stop to it."

The official report of the meeting was as follows :—

"The council very carefully considered the terms of settlement of the dispute at the Cambrian collieries, together with a letter from Mr. D. A. Thomas to Mr. Askwith, dated January 13th last, with a further statement made by Mr. L. Llewelyn at a meeting of the parties on February 11th.

"The council regret that the absence of mutual trust and confidence between managers and workmen at these collieries render them unable to accept terms that leave the wages of the workmen so absolutely dependent upon the decisions of the managers of the mines.

"The council desire to point out that this dispute was originally caused by the owners of the Ely Pit locking out 800 workmen, with whom they had no dispute, for the purpose of bringing undue pressure to bear upon workmen in the Bute Seam to accept an unfair price-list.

"Further, in addition to locking the men out, employment was refused them at all of the collieries of the Cambrian Combine.

"While the council are unable to settle upon these terms, they are still prepared to endeavour to effect a settlement upon either of the following bases :—

"That the owners agree—

"(1) To confine the dispute to a settlement of the price-list for the Bute Seam, and that all workmen employed in other seams be allowed to return to work either at the Ely Pit or other collieries.

"(2) The payment of 2/6 per ton cutting price for the Bute Seam.

"(3) The price-list settled upon in October last to be given a fair trial for twelve months, provided that the owners agree that in places where the workmen are unable to earn their former wages they shall be made up to the amount earned prior to the stoppage.

"(4) The price to be paid for cutting the Bute Seam to be submitted to arbitration in the event of the offer of 2/6 not being accepted.

"The council contend that the acceptance of either of the above terms would conduce to the more peaceable working of these collieries than the terms submitted by the owners.

"The Executive unanimously rejected the terms of settlement proposed at the conference."

In due course the workmen communicated this decision to the Board of Trade, by whom it was officially conveyed to Mr. T. J. Callaghan. Before giving the reply of Mr. Callaghan to the new counter-proposals suggested by the workmen's representatives it may be useful to draw attention to one or two of the considerations which made the meeting of the Council on February 16th in some respects one of the most humiliating incidents of the struggle. In the first place it marked the last stage of the surrender of the Executive to the demands of the Strike Committee ; and in the second place it for the first time identified the Federation in its collective capacity with the action of the Cambrian Combine workmen in repudiating an agreement arranged on their behalf by their accredited representatives and in rejecting the advice of Mabon and Mr. D. Watts Morgan. The Council had at the delegate conference of December 7th vaguely committed themselves to the rejection of the October 22nd terms by the use in the resolution which they submitted to the conference of the words "that, having failed to secure a satisfactory settlement of the dispute at the Cambrian collieries," but it was at this meeting of February 16th—or four months after the Mabon-Davis settlement—that they first publicly pronounced that provisional settlement unacceptable. The only new facts introduced into the dispute since October 22nd were the assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas and the supplementary undertakings given by Mr. Leonard Llewelyn at the meeting held at Cardiff on February 11th. So far as they went those assurances and undertakings, if not a great improvement upon, were obviously in no sense derogatory of, the agreed terms. Given in the first instance by the employers at the request of Mr. Askwith, and described by him as "definite" and as "clearly stated," they carried compromise on the question of abnormal places as far as it possibly could be carried short of committing the Company to the principle of a guaranteed minimum wage. To that principle the employers had from the very outset made it clear they could not agree either as a Company or as members of the Coalowners' Association; but to the workmen the compromise, in the opinion of the M.F.G.B. delegates who had taken part in the negociations which led to it, was a very material point gained. Yet in spite of this improved offer the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation on February 16th, adopted a course of action which, four months' earlier, when they had less favourable terms before them, they so far from considered themselves justified in adopting that they actually appointed a

special deputation of four of their representatives to wait on the Strike Committee and endeavour to persuade them to give those less favourable terms a trial before coming out on strike.

Naval Board's Reply.

As the various points raised in their letter to Mr. Askwith are dealt with by Mr. Callaghan's reply to Mr. Askwith the text of that reply may be usefully given in its entirety. Dated February 24th, it is as follows :—

"The Naval Colliery Company (1897), Limited,
"Cardiff, February 24th, 1911.

"Dear Sir,—I have to own receipt of your letter of the 20th inst., with a copy of a letter from Mr. T. Richards, M.P., dated the 16th inst. I was aware of the contents of this letter, the resolution in question having been published last week in the local Press.

"I much regret that the result of our last conference has been so unsatisfactory, as I had hoped that if a settlement was not reached the leaders of the men would at least have acted on the suggestion made by you that the opinions of the men concerned should be ascertained by ballot. The Council in putting forward their four alternative methods of settlement are again putting forward proposals which have been repeatedly rejected by my Company.

"Let me put on record briefly the reasons why we cannot accede to either of these alternatives :—

"(1) It is essential to the successful working of the Ely Pit that a fair price-list be settled for the Bute Seam.

"For years my Company has sought such a settlement without success, and eventually decided to give notice to terminate contracts at this pit. It cannot be re-opened till a settlement has been arrived at.

"(2) In October last, Mr. Fred Davis and the Right Hon. William Abraham, M.P., the respective chairmen of the owners' and the men's side of the Conciliation Board, were appointed by this body as conciliators to endeavour to settle the question of a fair price. Eventually, terms were agreed, viz., 2/1.3d. per ton, which Mr. Abraham and Mr. Watts Morgan, the miners' agent of the district, strongly urged the men to accept. These terms, it is well known, were higher than those paid for the same seam in any neighbouring colliery. In view of the foregoing, the Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation are not wanting in courage in putting forward their demand for 2/6 per ton.

"(3) This suggestion is a breach of the Conciliation Board Agreement, as it involves a guaranteed minimum wage —which my Company has consistently refused to agree to.

"(4) My Company is unable to agree to this suggestion, as it is contrary to the policy of the Coalowners' Association, but virtually there was arbitration on this seam, though without an umpire; there was no necessity for an umpire in this case, as the parties were agreed.

"I am sorry the Council appear to consider that the assurances given by Mr. D. A. Thomas for himself and the Board are not to be trusted. They were given with the single view to conciliation, and neither I nor my Board can do anything more.

"It only remains for me to thank you, sir, for the trouble and attention you have given to this matter in the endeavour to bring both sides into harmony, and to regret that your efforts have not been successful.—I beg to remain, yours faithfully,

"T. J. CALLAGHAN.

"G. R. Askwith, Esq., K.C.,
"Board of Trade, London."

The Ballot of March 25th.

This breakdown in the negociations brought to an end all hopes of an early settlement of the dispute; and on February 24th the Executive Council increased the strike levy from 1/- to 2/- per month. The Miners' Federation of Great Britain, however, dissatisfied with the course events had taken in the coalfield, decided on March 3rd to send Messrs. Ashton and Harvey to South Wales. Mainly in consequence of the M.F.G.B. pressure, the South Wales Executive Council on March 7th decided to appeal through the Board of Trade for another conference, and to instruct Mr. T. Richards, M.P., to see Mr. Askwith,* but as the Council was not prepared to offer more acceptable proposals than those set out in Mr. Richards' letter of February 16th the owners thought such a conference would serve no good purpose and it was declined. Mr.

*NOTE.—On March 9th, 1911, Mr. Askwith addressed the following letter to Mr. T. J. Callaghan, acting chairman of the Naval Company:—

"Dear Sir,—I have been requested by representatives of the South Wales Miners' Federation, subsequent to their meeting on Tuesday last, to ask whether you will be good enough to attend a further conference with the representatives who were present at the last conference at Cardiff under my chairmanship.

"I am informed that the proposal the Welsh Miners' Federation and other representatives desire to bring before you is to suggest that under all the circumstances of the case, in order that definite settlements may be reached, there should be an understanding that, in the event of the manager and the miners' agent being unable to settle the price in any particular place in the Bute Seam only, during the coming year, the difficulty should

Askwith was bitterly disappointed at the failure of his efforts ; that failure the Board of Trade is stated to have attributed to the "impossible attitude" of the strikers, and after March the Department had nothing more to do with the dispute.

The M.F.G.B. then directed its energies in favour of a ballot of the workmen on the terms of October 22nd and the assurances given by Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn. The local strike committee were strongly opposed to this course ; but the M.F.G.B. delegates were able to persuade the Council to agree to it and to carry it through in defiance of the opposition of the local strike leaders. On March 22nd, Harvey and Ashton, accompanied by Messrs. T. Richards and Alfred Onions, proceeded to Tonypandy and met the Joint Strike Committee in private conference. This visit provoked a recrudescence of public disorders. The members of the committee declined the deputation a fair hearing ; Messrs. Harvey and Ashton were hooted by the crowd ; and on March 22nd, 23rd and 24th serious attacks were made on workmen who had resumed their employment, and severe street rioting and sharp conflicts took place between the strikers and the police at Clydach Vale and Blaen-Clydach. In this atmosphere of terror and intimidation the ballot was carried through on March 25th. The ballot paper was as follows :—

I am in favour of accepting the proposed terms of settlement.	I am against accepting the proposed terms of settlement.
FOR.....	AGAINST.....
If you vote "for" put this portion of paper in the box.	If you vote "against" put this portion of paper in the box.

The slip of paper on which these alternatives were printed was perforated in the centre. The voters were instructed to tear off the

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be settled by me. Such settlement, if any matter was thus brought up, not to be cited or used as any precedent for arbitration or reference in South Wales, to be confined to the Bute Seam only at the Ely Pit, and to be hedged round with any desired restrictions to prevent it being used as any precedent. Thereupon the ballot of the Cambrian miners to be immediately taken, and every effort made to carry the ballot through in favour of resumption of work.

"The representatives further desire to state that, should the owners feel doubtful of their ability to accept the suggestion, they would wish the matter to be brought as soon as practicable before the Coalowners' Association.—I am, yours faithfully, G. R. ASKWITH."

The suggested arbitration was considered at a meeting of the Coalowners. Association on March 14th and unanimously rejected.

half which expressed their views, place it in the ballot box, and retain the other half. Members of Executive Council were present at each of the polling offices, but many of the local strike leaders were also engaged in the conduct of the ballot, and members of the Strike Committee employed themselves in distributing pins to the strikers on their way into the ballot rooms and instructing them to "show their colours" as they came out. Except in very rare instances these instructions were readily obeyed. The men came out of the polling offices with the "For" portion stuck in the lapels of their coats or on the fronts of their caps or hats, and when a workman was discovered emerging from the booth without his ballot paper exposed he was immediately requested to show it and was lucky if he got away without some rough handling. Conducted under such conditions the result of this secret (! !) ballot was a foregone conclusion, and when the poll was declared on the afternoon of the same day at Cardiff the figures were as follows :—

For acceptance	309
Against	7,041
Majority against ...	6,732

"Anarchy and Red Riot."

No boys under 16 were allowed to vote. Of the resident eligible voters 81.6 per cent. voted, and of these 95.8 per cent. declared against the proposed terms of settlement. Reporting on these occurrences to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, Mr. T. Ashton wrote :—

> "We attended a Council meeting of the South Wales Federation on the 21st March. The meeting decided by a large majority that a ballot vote of the men on strike should be taken on the terms approved of by the Executive Committee of the Federation of Great Britain. Mr Harvey and myself were asked to go with Messrs. Richards and Onions to Tonypandy and report to the full committee of the Cambrian Combine workmen. We went there the next day March 22nd, and when we arrived at Tonypandy the streets were full of men and youths, who to our surprise shouted out : 'No ballot.' 'Go back to England.' 'Keep your £3,000.' 'Give us the 20th rule.' We got through to the meeting room, and met the Committee, a number of whom showed a spirit of hostility both to myself and Mr. Harvey. After we had left, Mr. Richards still remaining, the meeting agreed that the ballot should take place. Mr. Harvey and myself were escorted to the railway station through a by-path by two of the men who left the meeting and who had some influence on the waiting crowd of men and youths

outside the schoolroom gate. Before we arrived at the station we were again in the main street amidst the shouting crowd. The two men were still with us, and policemen following behind, who came on to the station. A ballot of the men was taken on the Saturday following, but what a fiasco ! "

Mr. W. E. Harvey's impressions of his visit were expressed in even more forcible language :—

" It appears to me," he said, " from what I have witnessed in the strike area that the men are out of hand entirely. The position of affairs has been stigmatised as a reign of terror, and that description is not far from the truth. The outlook is indeed serious when members of a Trades Union break away from the constitution and authority of their own organisation and reject the advice given them by their own leaders. This is what they have done in this case with the advice of Mabon and D. Watts Morgan. The policy they are pursuing at the present moment must lead to disruption and disintegration. It makes some of us seriously consider whether tribunals should be instituted whereby such disputes as this could be submitted to a Board—call it a Conciliation Board if you like—with an independent chairman, whose decision should be final, and anyone breaking away from that decision on either side should receive no financial support during the period of contumacy. Anything is better than the state of anarchy and red riot such as prevails at Tonypandy to-day. I have been a trade union leader for 30 years, and have never witnessed anything equal to it."

Official notice of the conduct of the strikers was taken by the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation on April 11th, when it passed a resolution sincerely regretting the discourteous treatment of the M.F.G.B. delegates, and strongly disapproving the conduct of those who had been guilty of it.

At the annual conference of the South Wales Miners' Federation opened at Cardiff on Monday, March 27th, the result of the ballot was accepted without demur, and the conference passed the following resolution :—

" That this conference, after careful consideration of the failure of the negociations for a settlement of the matters in dispute at the Cambrian Combine collieries and the decisive declaration by a ballot vote of the workmen that the terms offered by the employers are unsatisfactory, calls upon the members of the Federation to regularly pay the levies called by the Executive Council in support of these work-

men, and that every district be requested to send on their contributions at once, pending the collection from their members of the whole of the arrears owing on the Cambrian Combine levies."

The annual statement of the Federation accounts submitted to this conference showed that many of the districts were in a state of passive revolt against the Cambrian Combine levies.

Miners' Passive Revolt Against Strike Levies.

Between November and the end of December, during which the first of the 1/- levies had been in force, the total amount paid in was only £6,633, though the membership, excluding miners on strike, had during that period exceeded 115,000. Of that £6,633, moreover, £2,998—or just a little less than half the total amount paid in—was contributed by the Rhondda No. 1 district, where the levy was 2/- per month. The Rhondda No. 1 district included the collieries on strike, and calculating the number of men at work there at 18,000 the total average payment was 3/4, while for the rest of the coalfield the average payment was about 8d. During the first three months of 1911 the payments became still nore irregular ; the drain on the central fund, therefore, continued unchecked till that fund became depleted for strike or lock-out purposes ; and the only course then left to the Federation was that of calling upon the districts to make up their Combine strike levy arrears from their district funds, which on December 31st, 1910, amounted in the aggregate to £50,254, as compared with a total of £73,425 at the end of 1909. At the end of December, 1910, the central funds, which stood at £128,165 at the end of 1909, had been reduced to £78,548 and the lodge funds from £24,486 to £21,426—making a total reduction in all funds, when the Cambrian Combine strike had been only two months in progress, of £75,848. At the conference of March 27th, a scheme was adopted for increasing the membership contributions from 1/- to 2/- per month, but it was decided to take a ballot of the members before putting it into force. That ballot, however, has not yet been taken.

During April outside influences were brought to bear, notably by the "South Wales Daily News," in favour of a proposal to seek a way out of the deadlock by some agreed form of arbitration. It was inconsistent with the policy of the Coalowners' Association and antagonistic to the provisions of the Wages Agreement to ask for arbitration on the dispute over the price-list and the abnormal places questions ; but at least one successful precedent existed for the intervention of an umpire to determine questions of interpretation or procedure, and among other suggestions made at this period was one that Lord St. Aldwyn—who, as the independent chairman of the South Wales Coal Trade Conciliation Board has a casting vote when the workmen and the coalowners fail to agree on an application

M.F.G.B. Propose Arbitration.

for a rise or a reduction in the general wage rate—might be asked to decide whether or not the settlement of October 22nd was a settlement within the provisions of the Wages Agreement. This suggestion did not take practical shape. The general idea of arbitration, however, was taken up by the special conference of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain held at the Caxton Hall on April 26th, and was utilised with the view to a re-opening of negociations. In the course of his speech at that conference, Mr. Enoch Edwards, the president, defined the purpose of the proposed arbitration in the following words :—

> "As far as I understand the position it is this : the men are prepared to accept the conditions which have been offered by the Company if they are satisfied that the guarantees of the Company are bona fide, and will be carried out. As far as information has been given to me, if the men could have had absolute guarantees that those conditions would have been carried out they would have accepted them and gone on with their work. It seems to me that is a point which could be referred to arbitration, and somebody could make those conditions so clear that there could be no ambiguity."

None of the delegates spoke against arbitration on the point thus clearly defined by Mr. Enoch Edwards, and Mr. Tom Smith, the chief spokesman of the strikers' committee, said :—

> "Speaking as one who has had his finger on every point in this dispute I can assure you that is what we need. . . . . If this great Federation thinks that by offering arbitration it has found a means of affecting a settlement, then I say, on behalf of the Cambrian Combine men, we see no objection to it. . . . . We leave the case in your hands."

After a whole morning's discussion the following resolution was adopted unanimously :—

> "That in the opinion of this conference the matters in dispute in the Bute Seam at the Ely Pit of the Cambrian Combine should at once be submitted to arbitration, and this conference relegates to the Executive Committee of this Federation the taking of immediate steps in the matter."

This resolution had a double-edged purpose. It aimed at the re-opening of negociations, but it had the effect also of withdrawing the control of the strike out of the hands of the South Wales Miners' Federation—or, perhaps, to be more accurate, out of the hands of the Cambrian Combine Strike Committee. In the direction of a peaceful settlement this was a great point gained, for it not only

promised to secure for the new negociations that dispassionate handling which was almost impossible to men animated by local prejudices, but it also removed the locale of those negociations far beyond the highly charged atmosphere of the strike area. In the "Western Mail" on May 3rd, Mr. W. Brace, M.P., discussing the probable attitude of the strikers towards any award that might follow, wrote: "Whatever the terms of the award may be they will be honourably accepted by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and equally observed by the workmen." We shall see how far this prophecy uttered with so much confidence was fulfilled.

The Executive Council of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain lost no time in giving effect to the resolution. On April 28th, Mr. T. Ashton, the secretary of the M.F.G.B., wrote to Mr. W. Gascoyne Dalziel, enclosing a copy of the National conference resolution, and stating:—

> "If the South Wales Coalowners' Association agree to the proposal contained in this resolution we hope they will be prepared to commence proceedings at once, for representatives will be ready at any time to meet them in any way they desire.
>
> "May I suggest that the president and secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and the president and secretary of the South Wales Miners' Federation meet four representatives of the coalowners?
>
> "If you can agree to this suggestion I can arrange for our side. If this suggestion is not accepted, kindly let me know what you suggest."

On May 1st, Mr. Dalziel replied:—

> "I have laid your letter before the owners' side of the Conciliation Board of South Wales, and they desire me to say that it is impossible for the South Wales Coalowners' Association to agree to refer the dispute in the Bute Seam at Messrs. the Naval Company's Ely Pit to arbitration. Such a course would strike at the fundamental principle of our Conciliation Board Agreement. Further, the Association would point out that a settlement was come to between Messrs. F. L. Davis and the Right Hon. W. Abraham under the machinery of the Conciliation Board, and such settlement was recommended for acceptance by the men's representatives.
>
> "But if the Executive of the Miners' Federation think that any useful purpose can be served by a meeting, the coalowners would be pleased to arrange for four representatives to meet the four representatives of the Miners' Federation named in your letter to me.—Yours faithfully,
>
> "W. GASCOYNE DALZIEL."

On May 2nd, Mr. Ashton wrote:—

"Our Executive Committee, I know, are of opinion that a meeting such as I suggested in my letter of the 28th ult. would not only be of a useful purpose, but we think that beneficial results would accrue therefrom."

Settlement of May 15th.

The joint meeting, at which the owners of the affected collieries were represented by Messrs. F. L. Davis, W. J. Heppell, T. Griffiths and Mr. W. Gascoyne Dalziel, and the M.F.B.G. by Messrs. Enoch Edwards and T. Ashton (President and Secretary of the M.F.G.B.), and W. Abraham, M.P., and T. Richards, M.P. (President and Secretary of the South Wales Miners' Federation), was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, London, on the 5th May, and the course of the negociations may perhaps be better given in the report of Mr. Ashton himself :—

"Mr. Edwards proposed that the dispute at the Cambrian Combine should be referred to arbitration for settlement, and he mentioned the Chairman of the South Wales Conciliation Board, who might act as umpire.

"The owners said that they could not agree to arbitration ; there was nothing in the rules or agreement of the Conciliation Board that gave them that power, but they would be willing to use the machinery of the Conciliation Board in any way to assist in securing the assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas's letter to Mr. Askwith of the Board of Trade, January 13th, 1911.

"After some discussion they suggested the following :—'In any case of complaint by the men that the management are not paying in accordance with the assurances made, they would be prepared to agree that the dispute be referred to a tribunal of three coalowners and three miners' representatives, or they would be prepared to agree to two, one on each side.'

"The meeting was adjourned for a week. The parties met again on the 12th May.

"Mr. Edwards, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Richards, and myself submitted a draft proposal containing the terms which were agreed to at a subsequent meeting.

"After some discussion the owners said that it would be a new undertaking. They could not agree, but would consider the proposal.

"The meeting was adjourned until Monday, the 15th May, when the following terms were agreed to and signed :—

"Text of the Agreement.

"Westminster Palace Hotel, London. Terms agreed upon this 15th day of May, 1911, between Fred L. Davis, Thomas Griffiths, William John Heppell, and William Gascoyne Dalziel, on behalf of the owners of the Naval Collieries, Cambrian

Collieries, Glamorgan Collieries, and the Britannic Collieries (herein referred to as the owners' representatives), and Enoch Edwards, M.P., Thomas Ashton, the Right Hon. William Abraham, M.P., and Thomas Richards, M.P., on behalf of the workmen employed at the collieries named (herein referred to as the workmen's representatives), in reference to the strike now pending at the same collieries.

"(1) The workmen's representatives will recommend that such workmen as have been employed at the before-mentioned collieries for whom places are available shall resume work at once, and that all other workmen shall resume work as soon as their places are ready for them. The workmen in the seam in which the dispute in the Ely Pit of the Naval Collieries arose will return to work on a trial for twelve calendar months, from the 31st day of May instant upon the terms approved by Mr. F. L. Davis and the Right Hon. W. Abraham, M.P., the respective presidents of the two sides of the South Wales Conciliation Board, on the 22nd October last, namely, the Company to pay a cutting rate of 2/1.3d. per ton on the Upper Five Feet Seam, such payment to include the cutting, filling, and cleaning of large, clean, screen coal, and for all labour performed in dealing with the clod and stone up to twelve complete inches in thickness, with a payment of ¼d. per inch per ton for every complete additional inch in thickness. All other items of labour to be paid for in accordance with the schedule of rates agreed to between the management of the said collieries and the Workmen's Committee on the 12th day of October, 1910, the prices above mentioned to be based on the 1877 standard.

"(2) That during the trial the assurances contained in Mr. D. A. Thomas's letter of 13th January, 1911, addressed to Mr. G. R. Askwith, K.C., and also the verbal assurances made by Mr. L. W. Llewelyn and Mr. Callaghan at a meeting held in the Mining Institute at Cardiff on the 11th day of February last, shall be carried out.

"(3) That in any cases where a difference shall arise in the said seam in dispute at the Ely Pit as to whether any particular workman shall be receiving sufficient allowances in accordance with this agreement, it shall be referred to six persons to determine any such difference. Such six persons shall be elected from the members of the Board of Conciliation for the coal trade

of Monmouthshire and South Wales, three from the coalowners' representatives, and three from the workmen's representatives; and if, after consideration, such six representatives fail to come to an agreement, then the Independent Chairman for the time being of the Board of Conciliation shall be called in, and the case or cases shall be fully discussed before him, and in case parties still fail to agree the said Independent Chairman shall give his casting vote as to whether or no the assurances contained in the said letter and in the said interview are being carried out. It is further agreed that there shall be no delay by either party in dealing with any case that may arise in this agreement.

" (Signed)

" FRED. L. DAVIS.	ENOCH EDWARDS.
" THOS. GRIFFITHS.	THOMAS ASHTON.
" W. J. HEPPELL,	WM. ABRAHAM.
" W. GASCOYNE DALZIEL.	THOS. RICHARDS."

Owners' Triple Offers.

In the following statement a comparison is made between the original terms and those offered by the Company at different dates down to the agreement of May 15th.

Arbitrators' Original Offer of June 8th, 1910.	Conciliation Agreed Terms of October 22nd, 1910.	M.F.G.B. Agreed Terms of May 15th, 1911.
(1) A cutting price of 1/9 per ton (1879 standard); (2) 1d. per ton for stone irrespective of thickness; (3) Clod to be paid at the same rate as scheduled on the Five Feet Seam price-list at the same Colliery; (4) Dead work list as paid in Five Feet Seam, with the following exceptions: That ripping top be paid for at the rate of 1½d. per inch per ton for all thicknesses, instead of 18 inches nil, and above 18 inches 3d. per inch. (Offered by Mr. T. Griffiths under first Conciliation Board attempt to settle).	(1) A cutting rate of 2/1.3d. per ton, including all labour in dealing with clod and stone up to 12 inches plus ¼d. per inch per ton for every complete additional inch in thickness (1877 standard). (Supplemented by assurances given on Jan. 13th and on Feb. 11th, 1911, that the average level of wages at the Naval Colliery shall not be reduced; that low wages due to working difficulties in the Upper Five Feet Seam shall be increased by customary allowances; that in case of failure to agree over allowances between the workman and the local manager the miners' agent may come down to working place and settle the allowance with the general manager himself; that such an arrangement shall apply to normal as well as abnormal places, Mr. Llewelyn specifically undertaking to pay a fair day's wage for a fair day's work). (2) No workman to be victimised (3) The above price-list to be given a year's trial.	(1) Full terms of October 22nd, 1910, and the assurances of February 11th, 1911, and in cases of a difference or differences between a workman or workmen and Company in regard to sufficiency of allowances, sub-committee of six under Conciliation Board (3 from each side) shall determine such differences, and if it fails to agree the Independent Chairman to be called in to give casting vote as to whether or no the assurances are being carried out. (2) Workmen's representatives agree to recommend workmen to resume work at once.

CHAPTER VIII.

CAMBRIAN NEGOCIATIONS (FINAL STAGE).

Strikers Resist M.F.G.B. Settlement.—Violent Executive Scenes.—Allegations of Treachery.—Strike Leaders' frantic Denouncement of May Terms.—Mabon and Mr. T. Richards accused of having been "palpably fooled."—Appeal for national action in support of a general minimum wage of 8/- a day for Colliers and of 5/- a day for other workmen.—A South Wales Delegate Conference Rejects the Terms of May 15th.—Leaders at Loggerheads.—Mr. T. Ashton's Circular of June 2nd.—Mabon denounces the general minimum wage policy as one of "despair and starvation."—M.F.G.B. throw over the Cambrian Strikers and Withdraw their Grant.—Strikers still Undismayed.—The "assurances" Question Revived.—Mr. Ashton states they mean at least 6/9 a day.—Mr. Ashton's Interpretation Repudiated.—Dramatic Developments.—An Unreal Agitation.—Appeal for Renewed National Support Fails.—Coalowners' Protest against non-adoption of the May Terms.—Correspondence between Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. Ashton over the assurances.—A Clear Understanding.—The Last Card.—Strikers given the option of the October or May Terms.—They accept the May Terms.—Leaders charged with Rigid Indifference.—Back to Work.—Mr. D. A. Thomas' warnings.

Strikers Resist M.F.G.B. Settlement.

It will be seen from this statement that the owners had on no less than four occasions modified their terms in order to meet the objections of the workmen. On October 22nd they agreed to terms which, in the form they were initialled on behalf of the workmen, were suggested by the representatives of the workmen; on December 10th verbally, and subsequently on January 13th in a letter to Mr. Askwith, Mr. D. A. Thomas, in order to allay the anxiety of the workmen caused by the dissemination of a statement that the Naval Company were determined to reduce the general average of wages at the Naval pits, gave an assurance that the Company had no intention or desire to reduce the average wages, and that where low wages were caused by difficulties in working places they would be supplemented by allowances so as to enable fair wages to be made; on February 11th these assurances were repeated and amplified by Mr. Llewelyn, and machinery was set up which, in case of disputes over allowances, would allow the agent to go down the mine and settle the allowance with the general manager in the working place; and on May 15th the workmen were given the further right to call in a committee of the Conciliation Board to decide

differences as to whether any particular workman was receiving sufficient allowances, and, failing agreement by that committee, to call, in the last resort, upon the Independent Chairman to "give his casting vote as to whether or no the assurances are being carried out." The strikers, however, cared little or nothing for these concessions; they regarded them as mere trimmings of the hem of the dispute. To them the fatal defect was the inclusion in them all of the settlement of October 22nd—a settlement which denied them their demands for a cutting rate of 2/6 per ton or a guaranteed minimum wage equal to the consideration rates of about 6/9 per day paid in abnormal places in the disputed seam prior to the strike. To those demands they held tenaciously, and the events of the next few weeks will show that in their adhesion to those demands they were prepared to resist the Miners' Federation of Great Britain as fiercely as they had resisted their local leaders.

At a meeting of the Executive Council of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, held in London on May 19th, the terms of the 15th were unanimously approved. They were accepted also unanimously by the Monmouthshire and South Wales Coalowners' Association at a special meeting of that body held at Cardiff on May 20th. Mr. D. A. Thomas, who had returned home from South America on the evening of May 15th, said that while he was not enamoured of the terms, he would, as a loyal member of the Association, bow to the decision of his colleagues. The Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, at a meeting held at Cardiff on the same day, and attended by Messrs. Enoch Edwards and T. Ashton of the M.F.G.B., failed to come to a decision, and arranged to meet again on the following Monday.

Violent Executive Scenes.

The meeting of May 20th was a veritable bear-garden; and the quarrels which it provoked were as virulent as they were discreditable.

> "Two or three representatives from the strike district," wrote Mr. Ashton, "who have recently been appointed on the Council, were grossly insulting. They said that the men had been sold—jockeyed and sold. That the case had been in the hands of Mr. Ashton, who knew nothing about the case, and with Mr. Edwards who knew less. They were asked to withdraw these words, but they refused."

The meeting broke up in confusion. The following day (Sunday, May 21st) Mr. Ashton addressed the following letter to Mr. T. Richards, M.P., from Manchester:—

> "Dear Mr. Richards,—I understand that as soon as Mr. Edwards and myself left your meeting yesterday, you decided to adjourn until Monday. I feel sorry that two or three of the members of your Council looked upon Mr. Edwards and myself

as unworthy of your trust: that we had sold the men. You know the difficulty we had in pulling the owners to accept arbitration. They said definitely at the first meeting that it would be against the principle of your Conciliation Board Agreement. You will remember that the owners proposed a tribunal or committee of six or two to which cases in dispute that may arise in the disputed seam could be referred, and this they said was further than they had ever gone before ; but we made it clear that we could not agree to a committee unless whenever that committee disagreed a referee could be called in to give his final decision. We have obtained all in the terms of the agreement that we set out for, and fully carried out the instructions of the special conference, and yet we are told that we have jockeyed and sold the men.

"I have worked for the miners 45 years. I have attended on thousands of deputations, and assisted in settling hundreds of large and important disputes. Some of these settlements have not always been satisfactory to myself, but no man has ever said I sold them before yesterday.

" I hope your meeting to-morrow will act wisely, and accept the agreement unanimously.

" I am sure that it contains the best terms the men can ever get."

At the adjourned meeting of the Council, held on Monday, May 22nd, the differences between those members of the Council who favoured and those who opposed the acceptance of the May terms were no less acute than they had been on the previous Saturday. By eleven votes to seven it was decided to accept the terms, but four of the members who strenuously opposed acceptance had left the room, and it was decided to call a general conference of the whole coalfield to deal with the matter. The official report of the meeting of Monday, May 22nd, over which Mabon presided, was in the following terms :—

" Further discussion took place upon the terms arranged at the conference held last week in London in settlement of the Cambrian Combine Collieries dispute, and after various proposals had been considered for and against the recommendation of the acceptance of the terms it was ultimately decided that a conference of the representatives of the whole Federation of South Wales should be called at the Cory Hall, Cardiff, on Saturday next, at 10.30, to consider the proposed terms of settlement.

" After the decision of the conference had been arrived at the four representatives of the Rhondda district left the room refusing to take further part in the consideration of the form of the matter to be placed before the conference."

The four members who retired from the meeting were Messrs. T. Smith, John Hopla, Noah Rees, and Noah Ablett. At both the Saturday and the Monday meetings of the Council these four men, assisted by the other Socialist members of the Council, had fought strongly for the rejection of the terms, and on Wednesday, May 24th, Messrs. Noah Rees, J. Hopla, and T. Smith, with three other members of the Cambrian Combine Committee, acting independently and regardless of the wish of the Council that its decision should not be disclosed till the delegate conference, issued a manifesto on behalf of the Cambrian Combine Committee appealing to the lodges to authorise their delegates to oppose the recommendation of the Council that the terms of May 15th be accepted. The character of this manifesto, which was described by Mr. T. Ashton as "unfair, unjust, and misleading," may be judged from the following typical passage :—

Strikers' Frantic Appeal against May terms.

> "We have been deliberately and foully misrepresented by a large section of the public Press. We have been bludgeoned by the police. One of our comrades lost his life in contending with the police. Two comrades, in the stress of the struggle through illness and privation, committed suicide. Many of our fellows have suffered imprisonment. Some are now in prison who have had their liberty sworn away, and are as innocent of any crime as any reader of this appeal. If we could only tabulate even a part of the suffering and misery endured by our women and children, we feel sure that you will agree with us that the fight has gone too far and the suffering too great that we should now be handed over to the mercy of the Combine.
>
> "We ask you to say, friends, that the time has arrived when the surrender policy of our apologetic leaders must stop."

The document proceeded to taunt Mabon and Mr. T. Richards with having been for the second time "palpably fooled," and to refer sneeringly at the assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. Llewelyn by calling them "spoof assurances," and concluded with the following advice to the delegates as to what policy they should pursue at the conference of May 27th :—

> "For your manhood's sake do not seek to avoid your levies by this method. See rather that you send a mandate to Cardiff, not to hound us back against our will, but with a solid mandate that South Wales should go unitedly to the conference of June 14th in London and demand that National action be taken on the resolution now before that conference for an 8/- minimum for all colliers and 5/- for all unskilled labourers below that point. By these means,

and these only, can you save us, save the Aberdare men, and save yourselves."

The May Settlement Rejected.

The conference held at Cardiff, on Saturday, May 27th, was officially reported to have been attended by 288 delegates, representing 138,171 members, and at its close the following official report was issued :—

"This was a conference of representatives of lodges of the Federation called to consider the proposed terms of settlement arrived at by representatives of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain on May 15th. The whole day was spent in discussing the negociations that had preceded the arrival at these terms, and at the close the terms were unanimously rejected, and it was decided that the conference stand adjourned until Monday next to further consider the situation."

Owing to the sharp differences between the members of the Council the Executive recommendation, carried at the Council Meeting of May 21st, was not placed before the conference. Numerically the members were evenly divided on the point as to whether the terms should be accepted or rejected ; but the failure of the sectional policy, with which the older members of the Federation had been previously associated, to secure for the Cambrian Combine workmen a guaranteed minimum wage strengthened the hands of those leaders who had throughout been agitating for a general stoppage to just the extent it weakened the power of men like Mabon and Tom Richards. These two men fought hard for the acceptance of the agreement to which they had been signatories, but they were overborne by the opposition of the Socialist members of the conference. The policy advocated by the strike leaders in the manifesto which they had issued a few days previously triumphed, and at the adjourned conference on Monday the following resolution was unanimously carried :—

"That this conference, seeing the failure to secure a satisfactory settlement of the dispute at the Cambrian Combine Collieries, recommend to the lodges that the sectional strike policy hitherto adopted be reconsidered with a view of asking the Miners' Federation of Great Britain conference on June 14th to make common cause with these workmen by declaring a general stoppage throughout the Federation for the purpose of securing for all colliery workmen a definite guaranteed minimum wage ; failing this National action the South Wales Federation to declare a stoppage to secure this end. That this conference stands adjourned to the 12th of June to receive the decision of the lodges."

While this resolution, which carried the conflict further than ever from the real issues, was receiving the consideration of the lodges two notable incidents occurred which gave a sharp check to the national strike movement, led to an outspoken and bitter personal controversy between the local leaders, and to serious friction between the Socialist wing of the South Wales Miners' Federation and the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. These incidents were the issue on June 2nd, by Mr. T. Ashton, the secretary of the M.F.B.G., of a lengthy circular replying to the Cambrian Combine Strike Committee's circular and detailing the true story of the circumstances under which the M.F.G.B. Executive Council had been instructed to take charge of the negociations which resulted in the London settlement of May 15th ; and the appearance in the "South Wales Daily News," on June 3rd, of an article by Mabon, which he opened with the following dramatic couplet :—

Leaders at Loggerheads.

"The hour hath come,
"Someone must die for the people."

In this article Mabon denounced the attempt to bring about a national stoppage as a "policy of despair and starvation," and as one that "cannot but fail." This article he followed by another, in which he gave his own story of the circumstances under which he signed the terms of October 22nd and made publicly known for the first time the fact that the terms initialled by him on that date were virtually the terms proposed by the representatives of the Naval workmen. The two chief protagonists in the controversy which Mabon's articles provoked were Mabon and Mr. Vernon Hartshorn. The rival policies which these two leaders represented were exhaustively discussed ; and the effect of the discussion on the rank and file was later on revealed in an unmistakable manner. Mr. Ashton's circular possessed a more general interest. It was a resume of the part played by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain in the negociations which had taken place since the National conference held in London of January 24th and 25th. and concluded with the following "final remarks" :—

Mr. Ashton's Circular.

"There are a number of men in South Wales who do not want a settlement of the strike at the Combine collieries. All along they have been crying for Rule 20 to be put into operation. The terms of the agreement contain all that has been asked for, and now they are afraid of the settlement. 'There is a sure and certain way,' they say, 'and that is by South Wales going unitedly to the conference on June 14th in London, and demanding that National action be taken.'

"Tom Smith, in a letter to the 'Western Mail' on January 14th

last, said, 'We are told you must accept the terms on trial, provisionally signed and recommended by Mabon.' Again, we say 'Yes,' we are fully agreed to that, providing that in those places where men cannot make their living you will give a guarantee that their money shall be made up to what was paid them before coming out.

"We contend that the agreement signed by Messrs. Edwards, Abraham, Richards, and myself provides for all this and more.

"These men have only one weapon to fight with, that of 'force,' which alone means 'anarchy.'

"The Federation of Great Britain has many weapons—negociation, conciliation, arbitration, and Rule 20, when necessary, which means national action; but it is not intended that Rule 20 shall be put into operation until all other means have failed, otherwise it would not be successful.

"It was never intended to be used to assist a district to fix prices in a seam at a colliery, or in any case where less than 80 men are directly affected. No man with a grain of common sense would ever suggest it. There is scarcely a district in the Federation but could make a case similar to the one in mid-Rhondda. We should want Rule 20 in operation every month. I am afraid the advocacy of these men will not help in any way, but hinder the work of the Federation in obtaining a national minimum wage in abnormal working places.

"These men say that 'a Federation that cannot or will not protect us is not worth supporting.' This inference is aimed at a Federation that has permanently lifted the standard rate of wages 50 per cent., that has obtained an eight hours working day by law, and largely assisted in getting a Workmen's Compensation and other Acts of Parliament of lasting benefit to the miners.

"The South Wales dispute will be considered at the special conference on the 14th or 15th June, and it will be seen then whether the principles of trade unionism or anarchy will prevail."

Mabon's Diplomacy.

This circular caused much perturbation in the ranks of the strikers and among those of the miners' leaders who were supporting them. It was denounced as "built on falsehood," as "farcical," and as "a libel on the South Wales Miners." At a meeting of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, held on June 8th, the strike leaders proposed a resolution condemning its publication. Other members of the Council pointed out that the Strike Committee's manifesto was equally as objectionable, and in

the form in which it was adopted the resolution dissociated the Council from both, deprecated the controversy between Mabon and Mr. Hartshorn as injurious to the cause of the workmen, and piously instructed the members of the Executive not to engage in Press controversy on matters in dispute.

The Ashton circular and the Mabon-Hartshorn controversy had a decisive effect on the current of opinion in the coalfield, and practically gave its *coup de grace* to the proposal of a South Wales general stoppage to which the May conference had committed the coalfield in the event of the refusal of the M.F.G.B. to order a national stoppage. The vital differences between the leaders were reflected in the decisions of the lodges, and at the adjourned conference, held at Cardiff on June 12th, to receive the reports of the lodges the terms of the resolution adopted on May 29th were altered and made to read as follows :—

> " That this conference, seeing the failure to secure a satisfactory settlement of the disputes at the South Wales collieries, recommend to the lodges that the sectional policy hitherto adopted be reconsidered with a view to asking the Miners' Federation of Great Britain conference of June 14th to make common cause with these workmen by declaring a general stoppage throughout the Federation for the purpose of securing for all colliery workmen a definite guaranteed minimum wage.
>
> " That if the M.F.G.B. conference refuses to take national action upon the question of a general minimum wage the South Wales delegates shall support national action upon the question of abnormal places and lower paid workmen."

Mabon was absent in Northumberland attending to a labour dispute in that district on the date of this conference, and Mr. Brace took his place as chairman. The proceedings were of an uproarious description ; accusations and recriminations were freely bandied between the rival factions ; and acting under the instructions of ten or twelve lodges delegates moved for the resignation of Mabon and those members of the Executive Council who had approved of the terms of May 15th. This and other motions to the same end were ruled out of order by the chairman ; the plain and unpleasant truths which Mabon had driven home in his articles to the Press had weakened considerably the power of the recalcitrants ; and the end of the discussion was a compromise in which in this case the real immediate advantage lay with the Mabonites. The letter of the resolution conceded the demands of the extreme Socialists ; but its essential spirit affirmed the policy advocated by Mabon.

By the substitution of the words " South Wales collieries " for the words " Cambrian Combine collieries " which had appeared in

the original resolution the cloak of a local trouble under which the Socialists had been fighting a question of general interest was thrown off, and the true inwardness of the opposition of the Cambrian Strike Committee to the terms of October 22nd was revealed in all its nakedness. Once and for all it was made clear that what the leaders of the strike and those who had been supporting them in their violent courses had been contending for was not so much the settlement of a price-list for a particular seam of coal, but for the principle of guaranteed minimum wage under conditions which did not carry with them a corresponding guarantee of an equivalent minimum value of labour service. Mabon and his friends entertained no doubts as to what would be the attitude of the national conference on a demand involving such an undiscriminating and one-sided application. He had previously warned his fellow members of the South Wales Federation that the policy of a national stoppage on such lines was a policy "of despair and starvation"; and if the sanction which the older leaders gave to the passing of the amended resolution smacked of expediency, if not of insincerity, it is only right to point out that it was given at the price of the elimination from the original resolution of the words, "failing this national action, the South Wales collieries to declare a stoppage to secure this end."

The course of events at the national conference, which opened at the Westminster Palace Hotel, London, on June 13th, fully justified Mabon's protest. The discussion on the Cambrian trouble had not long been in progress before it became obvious that the South Wales delegates again stood practically alone in their demand for a national stoppage and that the defence which they set up for the repudiation of the settlement of May 15th was considered as hollow as it was audacious. The four men who had carried through that settlement were charged with having failed to carry out the instructions of the conference of April 26th; they were told that they ought to have insisted on arbitration on the price-list as well as the other questions in dispute; and that the failure of the M.F.G.B. delegates to insist on an open arbitration had absolved the strikers from all obligations to accept the settlement. Short shrift was made of these arguments by the president; the strike leaders were accused of pursuing courses as disruptive as they were arbitrary, and in the end the following resolution, framed by a Business Committee, of which Mr. John Williams, M.P., was a member, was adopted by an overwhelming majority:—

M.F.G.B. Withdraw their Grant.

> "That in the opinion of this conference the object sought for at the special conference held at the Caxton Hall on April 26th last is secured in the proposed terms of settlement of the Cambrian Combine dispute, signed on behalf of the

workmen by Messrs. Enoch Edwards, M.P., T. Ashton, W. Abraham, M.P., and T. Richards, M.P., and this conference now agrees to accept no further responsibility in reference to the dispute."

This resolution was carried by 465,000 votes against 137,000. The English, North Wales, and the Scottish delegates voted to a man in favour of the recommendation of the Business Committee ; those from South Wales were practically the only delegates to oppose it ; and the official report specifically stated that the 137,000 votes registered against the resolution represented the total South Wales membership of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. The decision of the conference on the abnormal places question was in the following terms :—

"That, having heard the reports from districts on this question, and seeing that these reports are incomplete and negociations with the coalowners are still proceeding, this conference adjourns until July 28th next to complete the reports and negociations in the respective districts, and also to decide what action shall be taken."

On this, as on the previous matter, the South Wales delegates fought stubbornly for immediate constitutional action on the lines of the decision of their own local conference on the previous Monday ; but they were again defeated by a delegate vote of 95 to 55, and the conference ended with the complete isolation as well as humiliation of South Wales. On the following day the Executive Council of the M.F.G.B. gave effect to the decision of the conference on the Cambrian trouble by limiting the duration of the grant to the week ending July 7th. Occurring at a period when agreements and contracts were unceremoniously violated by trade unions—and particularly by the South Wales Miners' Federation—it was noted with satisfaction that there was at least one great trade union which was not only prepared to stand by the bargain it had struck on behalf of its members, but was also determined enough to punish contumacy by the withdrawal of financial support. The influence of no man among the M.F.G.B. Executive was greater on the side of fidelity to the agreement than that of its president, Mr. Enoch Edwards, and its secretary, Mr. Thomas Ashton.

The plight of the Cambrian Combine strikers after the national conference of June 13th suggested the situation of an invading army deprived of its chief supply communication. For nearly five months the main line of financial support had been the weekly grant of £3,000 per week drawn from the wages of the miners of the rest of the country. With that supply cut off the continuance of the struggle became more hopeless than ever. The Cambrian, Gelli, Cilely and other strikes had long exhausted the fighting power

Strikers still Undismayed.

of the central resources of the local Federation; and the passive resistance of a large number of miners against the payment of the 2/- monthly Combine strike levy rendered that source of revenue utterly inadequate and unreliable. Thus with outside assistance stopped and with local resources all but exhausted it was thought that the strikers would admit the hopelessness of the fight waged against such odds and at once agree to a resumption of work. But the Cambrian Combine strikers rarely, if ever, did what nine people out of every ten expected they would do. And such was their perverseness even in the extremities of their situation in June. They were to realise a few months later that they were beaten men; but they would not admit defeat at this date—at any rate not to the public. Dissembling a bold front, they decided to continue the fight independent of the financial support of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and the Naval workmen passed a resolution interdicting Mabon and Mr. D. Watts Morgan from participation on their behalf in any future negociations. This defiance of the M.F.G.B. placed the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation in another dilemma; but in the midst of a situation so full of perplexity there came across the scene a change that was not only as dramatic as it was unexpected, but one which for the first time since the beginning of the strike gave an appearance of unity among the leaders and of co-operation between the strikers and the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation. Later events were to show that the change was a purely artificial one, and that the unity which at the time was shouted from the house tops was more a simulated than a real nity; but it gave rise to fresh complications, and was more than anything else responsible for the prolongation of the struggle.

This new phase arose out of the assurances given by Mr. D. A. Thomas in his letter to Mr. G. R. Askwith, K.C., of the Board of Trade, on January 13th, 1911. Those assurances, it will be recalled, were in the following terms:—

> "The question of a guaranteed wage can only be dealt with by the Conciliation Board for the coalfield as a whole, and it is not a question peculiarly affecting the Naval collieries, consequently it is not within the competence of my Board as such to deal with it.
>
> "I am, however, in a position to give you on behalf of the directors of the Naval collieries and myself a definite assurance that we have no desire or intention to reduce the general level of wages at the Naval collieries, while we would readily give our undertaking to supplement low wages by allowance as is customary throughout the coalfield, where such are caused by difficulties in working places so as to enable fair wages to be made."

It will also be recalled that the workmen, dissatisfied with what they considered the indefinite character of these assurances, induced Mr. Askwith to arrange a meeting with the Naval directors in order that they may obtain " a clear and definite understanding as to what is meant by the assurances." That meeting was held at Cardiff on February 11th, under the presidency of Mr. Askwith, and, as will have been seen from the notes of that day's proceedings, the workmen's representatives left the meeting with a clear impression that the " assurances " did not involve an undertaking on the part of the Company to pay a certain fixed minimum wage. Mr. Brace and others of the workmen's representatives who were present at that meeting pressed Mr. T. J. Callaghan, who represented Mr. D. A. Thomas (then absent in South America), to give some monetary value to the assurances particularly as Mr. Thomas had said that the Company had no intention to reduce the general average of the wages at the Naval Colliery, and had written to the Press that the average wages earned at the Naval pits for the eight months ending August, 1910, had amounted to 7/7.63 per collier per day ; but was unable to obtain any other reply than that the assurances had been given in good faith, and that they would be observed in the full knowledge of all that Mr. Thomas had written to Mr. Askwith and to the Press. That was as far as the Company could go.

" Assurances " Trouble Revived.

The working on day wage or consideration rates of the seam in dispute at the Ely Pit had in the opinion of the Naval Company made the establishment of the piece-rate principle of wage-payment and the resumption by the management of a disciplinary control and check over lazy workmen a necessity vital to the future successful working of the colliery ; hence the caution which the representatives of the Company exercised at that meeting in order to prevent the workmen or their representatives from receiving impressions that the Company assented in any sense to the principle of a minimum wage. In spite, however, of these precautions against misapprehension, the fiction was spread by well-meaning, but mis-informed, speakers that the assurances guaranteed the workmen the minimum of 6/9 per day which they had demanded as a condition of the acceptance of the price-list agreed upon by Mabon and Mr. F. L. Davis. The Ashton circular encouraged the misapprehension by stating that the settlement of May 15th contained " all that had been asked for," but for different reasons the interpretation that the assurances meant a guaranteed minimum wage of 6/9 per day was quickly repudiated both by the strike leaders and the Naval Company. In a letter to the " South Wales Daily News," on June 6th, Mr. Tom Smith wrote :—

> " By some mysterious mental process a definite wage of 6/9 per day has been translated to mean the same thing as

Mr. Thomas's assurances. How this can be done passes all my powers of imagination to understand."

On June 15th, Mr. D. A. Thomas made the following statement on the subject in an interview :—

"I think it as well we should be quite clear upon one point—that at any rate in my judgment the assurances do not at all bear out the construction put upon them by some of the miners' leaders. To allow the construction that these gentlemen put on the terms to pass without contradiction would be courting trouble in the future. I hope and believe that under the terms initialled by Mabon and Mr. F. L. Davis a good workman would easily earn from 10/- to 15/- a day, but there is nothing in my assurance which can legitimately be construed into a guarantee of a minimum of 6/9 per day whether a workman works or not."

These disclaimers, one from each side, did much to recall to the minds of the workmen and their leaders the true meaning of the assurances; but on June 21st, the situation was further confused by a doubtless well-intentioned but injudiciously timed open letter from Mr. T. Ashton to Mr. T. Richards, M.P., in which the secretary of the M.F.G.B. wrote :—

"I understand the men on strike have agreed some months ago that they would resume work at a tonnage rate of 2/1.3d., provided that those men who could not earn more than 6/9 per day should have their wages made up to that amount. I can safely say that the four representatives of the Miners' Federation who signed the agreement would never have signed it if in their opinion it meant anything less than the men have already agreed to accept. If attempts were made to pay anything less than 6/9 per day, the workmen would be justified, through the South Wales Miners' Federation, in appealing to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and I can say that Mr. Edwards and myself—and I know that you and Mr. Abraham hold the same views—consider not less than 6/9 per day should be paid to a collier during the trial period. The terms of the agreement allow for a higher rate than 6/9 to be paid, and some of the best men in the coalfield we know would not work long for that amount.

"It is because we believe the proposed terms of settlement contain all the men have asked for that we hope the workmen's representatives will recommend the men to accept the advice of the Federation, and arrange to resume work as early as possible."

Mr. Ashton's Interpretation Repudiated.

Interviewed on this letter by a reporter of the "South Wales Daily News," on June 23rd, Mr. Mark Harcombe, the secretary of the Cambrian Combine Workmen's Joint Committee, said :—

> "There was nothing new in the letter. Mr Ashton was simply repeating that the M.F.G.B. position was that the men in the disputed seam would have their wages made up to 6/9 per day. Mr. Harcombe said he did not wish to prejudice the position before the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation meeting on Monday next to consider the position, but he would point out that Mr. D. A. Thomas had expressly stated that his assurances did not contain any money value. Mr. Thomas's offer was simply an expression of good faith, and the assurance he had given was that where the Company found a man doing a fair day's work they would pay him a fair day's wage, but he did not say what that would be. If the men had a guaranteed minimum wage of 6/9 per day, declared Mr. Harcombe, they would return to work at once. As far as the Combine Committee were concerned, they would have nothing to do with the independent chairman in the way it was put in the proposed settlement terms, as this method of settling disputes arising was too cumbersome to be effective."

The following question and answer are quoted from an interview with Mr. D. A. Thomas which appeared on the same subject in the "South Wales Daily News" on June 26th :—

> "Do you accept the construction placed upon your assurances by Mr. T. Ashton in his letter to Mr. Tom Richards ?
>
> "No, most certainly not, and I have already stated so ; but of course, I can only speak for myself. I quite agree with the views expressed by Mr. Harcombe, the secretary of the Cambrian Combine Workmen's Committee, both as to the interpretation to be placed upon the assurances I gave Mr. Askwith of the Board of Trade, and also as to the method of settling disputes being too cumbersome to be effective. I think Mr. Harcombe states the position very fairly."

Dramatic Developments.

These two interviews were the innocent causes of dramatic developments in the latter half of June. The statements made in them seem to be true both in spirit and in letter to the definition given in the presence of Mr. G. R. Askwith at the meeting of Feb. 11th ; but among the members of the Executive Council of the South Wales Federation they appear to have fallen like a bolt from the blue, and the official report of the meeting of that Council held on

June 26th, and presided over by Mabon, was in the following brief but startling terms :—

> "That this Executive Council, in face of Mr. D. A. Thomas's declaration that the assurances contained in his letter to Mr. G. R. Askwith, K.C., of the Board of Trade, dated January 13th, 1911, guarantee no money value to the workmen, and do not mean that the workmen are entitled to 6/9 per day under the terms, as interpreted by Mr. Thomas Ashton in his letter of June 20th, 1911, to Mr. T. Richards, M.P., resolves to make representations to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain with a view to the continuance of the grant of £3,000 per week pending the re-consideration of the Cambrian Combine dispute by the National conference to be held in London on July 28th next."

The same evening the Council issued a circular, signed by Mr. T. Richards, to the members of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, in which they embodied the Mark Harcombe and D. A. Thomas interviews, and stated :—

> "The decision of the last conference, that the terms of settlement arranged by representatives of the Federation should be accepted, was arrived at under the impression that the terms guaranteed the workmen a fixed rate of wages in places where such wages were not secured by the rates of the price-list. Mr. Thomas Ashton, in his circular sent to the districts immediately before the holding of the conference, stated 'the agreement provides for all this and more.' Again, Mr. Ashton has issued to the members of the Federation what he describes as 'An open letter to Mr. T. Richards, M.P., secretary of the South Wales Miners' Federation,' in which he says : 'If attempts were made to pay anything less that 6/9 per day, the workmen would be justified—in appealing to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.'
>
> "Mr. D. A. Thomas, the managing director of the colliery company, in letters and interviews, printed in the South Wales newspapers, has now made it perfectly clear that not only will such attempts be made to pay less than 6/9, but that the assurances were not intended to guarantee the workmen that or any other sum as wages where they were unable to earn wages under the price-list."

The mistake of the Executive in adopting this resolution was only equalled by the blunder they committed in February, when, after the strike had been over three months in progress—the Naval

men had indeed been idle for over five months—and when a demonstration of firmness might have brought the dispute to an end, they formally threw over the Mabon-Davis settlement. Not only did the passing of such a resolution show a lamentable oversight of the provisions in the settlement of May 15th conceding to the workmen the right to call in an umpire in the event of a failure on the part of the Company to carry out the assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas—for how would the necessity for the services of an umpire arise if the agreement guaranteed the workmen a minimum wage of 6/9 per day?—and not only did the passing of that resolution indicate a baseless pretence that the members of the Executive Council had not known all through that the assurances carried with them no obligation to pay a fixed minimum wage, but it also meant a profoundly mistaken reading of the Ashton letter itself, for that letter did not contain any specific reference to Mr. Thomas's assurances.

An Unreal Agitation.

The history of the events in the coalfield and particularly the terms of the resolutions adopted by the Executive Council and by the miners' conferences held after the meeting over which Mr. Askwith presided at Cardiff, on February 11th, show only too clearly that the members of the Council understood perfectly that the assurances given by Mr. D. A. Thomas in his letter to Mr. Askwith of January 16th did not convey the offer of a fixed minimum wage of 6/9 per day. The action of the Council, on February 16th, in rejecting the assurances because of the "absence of mutual trust and confidence," and in demanding a guaranteed minimum wage equal to that earned prior to the stoppage; the rejection by ballot on March 25th of both the October terms and the assurances; the acceptance of the result of that ballot by the Executive; the literal terms of the settlement of May 15th; and the South Wales delegate conference resolution of May 29th calling for a national or a South Wales strike "for the purpose of securing for all colliery workmen a definite guaranteed minimum wage"—all these Executive and conference acts show beyond dispute that the leaders in South Wales were in no doubt as to what the assurances meant and as to what they did not mean. By the South Wales Executive Council manifesto and Executive resolution of June 26th, however, it is made to appear that by some extraordinary mistake the decision of the national conference of June 13th accepting the May settlement "was arrived at under the impression that the terms guaranteed the workmen a fixed rate of wages in places where such wages were not secured by the rates of the price-list." This, too, was the keynote of all the speeches made in the South Wales coalfield during the last few days of June and the early part of July.

Addressing a meeting in the mid-Rhondda Athletic Ground, on Wednesday, June 28th, Mr. Watts Morgan, dealing with the settle-

ment of May 15th, said :—

> " It is only fair to the four men who represented the workmen—Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. T. Ashton, Mabon, and Mr. T. Richards—to say that statements were made which warranted them in coming to the conclusion that, under the agreement ultimately arrived at, where it was proved that a man had done a fair day's work he would be paid 6/9. Hence, in the two circulars issued by Mr. T. Ashton, that gentleman emphatically stated that men working alike in normal and abnormal places would receive 6/9 per day where it could be proved that they had done a fair day's work. . . . It was now, however, a matter of common knowledge that Mr. D. A. Thomas had chosen to repudiate these negociations, and to disavow the statements made by Mr. T. Ashton as to the interpretation of the agreement."

At the same meeting Mr. Alfred Onions said that " the South Wales Federation Executive had fully believed that Mr. D. A Thomas's assurances contained money value, and Messrs. Harvey and Ashton, with Mabon and Tom Richards, had been of the same opinion. Mr. D. A. Thomas's letter, however, had disabused their minds. Mr. Thomas had gulled the men." At that meeting, also, Mr. J. Winstone said the assurances were only made to gull the men to return to work. Statements to a similar purpose were made by other leaders. Mr. Vernon Hartshorn emphasised that the effect of Mr. Thomas's disclaimer was " to close up the ranks of the men and their leaders on a fighting basis," and Mr. Brace, addressing a meeting at Crumlin, on July 11th, said that the Cambrian question would " now be solved on the minimum wage."

Some of the leaders who made these statements also encouraged the belief among the workmen that the M.F.G.B. would approve their conduct. One of the leaders, in an ill-concealed anonymous interview which he gave to the " Western Mail " on June 27th, said that " it was inconceivable that Mr. Enoch Edwards or Mr. T. Ashton would assume any other than a favourable attitude towards the appeal of the South Wales Federation " for the continuance of the grant of £3,000 and the reconsideration of the Cambrian Combine dispute at the conference of July 28th.

The palpable inconsistency between the above-quoted passages from the speeches of miners' leaders and the proved knowledge of the leaders that they had never regarded the assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas as involving the guarantee of a minimum wage of 6/9 per day was never explained, and the events of the next few days were destined to show that the Council of the M.F.G.B. had been as egregiously misjudged as Mr. D A. Thomas had been maligned. On Friday, June 30th, the Council of the M.F.G.B. flatly refused

either to continue the grant or to reconsider the South Wales dispute; and a few days later the resolution of conference stopping the grant was put into force.

Coalowners' Protest against Non-adoption of May Terms.

While these events were taking place correspondence was in progress between Mr. Ashton on the one hand and Mr. Dalziel (the secretary of the Coalowners' Association), Mr. D. A. Thomas, and Mr. Harcombe on the other. On June 27th, Mr. Dalziel, under the instructions of his Association, wrote to Mr. Ashton complaining that the terms of May 15th had not been carried out, and stating that :—

> "The owners' representatives, who were signatories to the terms, are at a loss to understand the delay which has taken place in obtaining the concurrence of the latter body to the arrangement arrived at, and they further instruct me to point out that having been induced to enter into the settlement by the assurance that the representatives of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and the South Wales Miners' Federation were like themselves fully authorised to make an agreement, they are entitled to a feeling of astonishment and disappointment that there has been no insistence upon the carrying out of the arrangement by the workmen at the collieries referred to.
>
> "Whilst recognising that there should have been a reasonable interval between the signing of the agreement and the putting of it into effect, the representatives of the coalowners feel that the necessary time for this has already been greatly exceeded, and that they are justified in calling upon the Miners' Federation of Great Britain to secure the adoption of the agreement by the workmen affected without any further delay."

Replying on July 3rd, Mr. Ashton gave an account of the proceedings of the M.F.G.B. and of the South Wales Miners' Federation since May 15th, and concluded his letter in the following words :—

> "The Miners' Federation of Great Britain have accepted the terms of agreement, but the South Wales Federation and the men on strike repudiate them.
>
> "The men contend that 'assurances' are of no money value. I have said in an open letter to Mr. Richards that they are worth 6/9 per day, and delegates from all parts of Great Britain at our special conference on June 13th placed the same construction upon them. (I ought to have added to any man who does a fair day's work, but of course that is already understood).

"Mr. D. A. Thomas however has stated publicly that he does not accept my interpretation of his assurances and that Mr. Mark Harcombe is right in his interpretations when he stated that the assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas are of no money value.

"I am in correspondence with Mr. D. A. Thomas, and I hope some good may come of it."

The correspondence between Mr. Ashton and Mr. D. A. Thomas, referred to the assurances and its drift is shown from the following excerpts :—

Mr. Ashton and Mr. D. A. Thomas.

Writing to Mr. Thomas on June 28th, Mr. Ashton drew his attention to the interview in which he (Mr. Thomas) had endorsed Mr. Harcombe's interpretation of the assurances, and proceeded :—

"Surely you would never write to Mr. Askwith assurances of no value and which meant nothing. I cannot believe it ; the newspaper reports must be wrong.

"You say that you do not accept the construction placed upon your assurances in my letter to Mr. Richards. You cannot find in my letter any reference to your assurances. My letter refers to the proposed terms of settlement, and there are other assurances in those terms which are clearer than those in your letter to Mr. Askwith.

"I may tell you that Mr. Llewelyn stated that he would take the Bute Seam entirely into his own hands, and that he would in every case pay a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. When asked what he considered a fair day's wage he mentioned several figures, but none less than 6/9.

"I thought we were approaching the end of this unfortunate strike, but the outlook is not good at present. It does seem to me that you can do very much to hasten the termination of the strike, and I hope you will use your great influence to that end."

Replying on June 30th, Mr. Thomas wrote :—

"In saying that no money value attached to the assurance contained in my letter to Mr. Askwith of January last I meant in the sense that it gave no guarantee of a minimum wage without a fair day's work in return.

"The expression may not be a happy one, but I borrowed it from Mr. Brace, who used it during the meeting of the Naval Workmen's Committee with the Naval Board on Feb. 13th, at which, by the way, you were present. Mr. Brace upon being told by both Mr. Callaghan and Mr. Llewelyn that my assurance did not mean that the wages in the disputed seam would necessarily be made up to any fixed

sum said 'the assurances do not therefore mean any money value.'

"The assurance was given at the request of Mr. Askwith. It was written in good faith and with a view to bringing about a settlement, though I am afraid that it has had quite an opposite result. In my letter to Mr. Askwith I assured him that the management of the colliery had no intention or desire to reduce the general average earnings at the Naval Collieries, but I declined to guarantee any fixed minimum amount to individual colliers.

"I cannot help thinking that your recent letter to Mr. Thomas Richards was unfortunate, however well intentioned its publication, and when I saw the construction you placed upon the terms of settlement which involved my assurance and that you considered they meant that no man under any circumstances was to receive less than 6/9 per day, I felt that I should be lacking in candour were I not to let it be known at once that I demurred to your interpretation. Had I let it pass unchallenged and afterwards declined to make the wages of any workman up to 6/9 I think you would have had good reason to complain of my silence.

"I thank you for your letter and appreciate the kindly spirit in which it is written. I admit the outlook is not at present favourable to an early settlement. Any influence I possess has been directed towards a friendly settlement, but holding the position of Chairman and Managing Director I regard myself as trustee of the interests of the shareholders, and you must not forget that while for some time before the strike the Naval colliers earned on an average something like 8/- per day, the owners of the colliery have on balance lost money since the commencement of the undertaking."

Acknowledging this letter on July 3rd, Mr. Ashton wrote :—

"There seems to be a clear way open to a final settlement of the dispute. In my letter to Mr. Richards I agree that there was an important omission. I should have said that a fair day's wage would be given for a fair day's work, but I thought that was understood.

"There would be no need for the machinery provided for in the terms of agreement if we considered that your assurances meant that no man under any circumstances would receive less than 6/9 per day. Mr. Llewelyn has stated that the men in the seam in dispute would be paid a fair day's wage for a fair day's work during the trial period, and in order that that should be carried out he would accept the whole responsibility. 'I will take this seam into my own hands,'

he said, 'and in any case where the manager and men disagree I will go down the pit myself and inspect the working place or places in dispute, and the miners' agent can come down also and see the place, and I will meet him and the men together in their working places, and whatever decision we may come to, I will put it in writing.'

"I think you will agree with me that it would be almost impossible to get beyond that point provided for in the terms of settlement, but in any case where the difficulty arising could not be settled by the manager and the men affected, or by the general manager and the miners' agent, then provision is made to come before the tribunal of six persons, six members of the Conciliation Board who will have power to call in an independent chairman. I do not think there would be one case—and I hope you will agree with me—which would come before this tribunal. I feel sure that all cases in dispute will be settled at the colliery and the most cumbersome part of the machinery will not be required.

"I cannot understand why this strike should continue. The men only want your assurances to be made plain. The men in the Bute Seam were, I understand, getting a wage of 6/9 per day before the strike, and I have interpreted that your assurances and those of Mr. Llewelyn mean that the amount will be paid to every man who does a fair day's work during the trial period. I know that at present some kind of rule prevails in the South Wales Coalowners' Association that a fixed sum shall not be mentioned, and Mr. Llewelyn made that clear at the meeting in the Mining Institute, Cardiff, on February 13th last. He said he was not permitted to name a fixed sum, but he would pay a fair day's wage for a fair day's work.

"The only difference between you, Mr. Llewelyn, the South Wales Coalowners' Association, and our Federation is as to the interpretation of your assurances. We think that a fair day's wage for a fair day's work cannot mean less than 6/9 per day. We are so near to agreement that apparently we do agree. Surely, something can be done to get these men back to their work.

"What do you suggest?"

The correspondence between Mr. Thomas and Mr. Ashton concluded with a letter in which Mr. Thomas said the explanations given in the above letter brought him and Mr. Ashton "into complete agreement," and in which he added:—

"Both Mr. Llewelyn and myself have always been ready to pay

a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, nor has either of us, to my knowledge, ever suggested that 6/9, including the percentage at present ruling, could be regarded as anything in excess of a fair day's wage for a collier doing a fair day's work at the Naval collieries, but we are not prepared to guarantee a minimum of 6/9 per day or any other fixed sum to good, bad, and indifferent workmen alike, and whether a man puts forth his best effort or not.

"If you think there is still any doubt as to my meaning and that it would at this juncture in any way help towards a friendly and permanent settlement of the dispute, were I to repeat explicitly that I consider 6/9 at the present rate of wages the least amount that should be paid at the Naval Collieries to a competent collier working on the coal for a fair day's work, I will gladly do so; beyond this I am afraid I have no suggestion to make."

The letters which passed between Mr. Ashton and Mr. Harcombe dealt with the same matter. They were the result of an anonymous letter addressed to Mr. Ashton from South Wales :—

"In reply to the latter part of that letter," wrote Mr. Ashton, "let me say that we have not failed to understand the assurances. I may remind you that Mr. Thomas had no part whatever in arranging the proposed terms of settlement, and I venture to say that it was in the minds of the whole of the eight men who signed the agreement that not less than 6/9 would be paid to all men who did a fair day's work and could not earn a wage at the contract price. . . .

"I have no authority for saying so, but I believe that Mr. Askwith and Mr. Mitchell of the Board of Trade had in their minds that the assurances meant nothing less than 6/9 per day to all colliers who did a day's work in the Bute Seam during the trial period."

Answering this letter on June 28th, Mr. Harcombe wrote :—

"I cannot say, I do not want to say, that you have not understood the assurances, but we do say that we hold very divergent views in reference to the assurances. You say they contain a guarantee of 6/9 per day; we say they do not. What Mr. Leonard Llewelyn said at the Mining Institute in reply to questions put to him as to what he considered a fair day's wage, he said 'it may be 7/-, 8/-, or 10/- or it may be 15/-.' Mr. Brace pressed him and his reply was 'if you expect me to give a stipulated figure for a fair day's wage well, personally, I refuse to do so,' and this was the consistent attitude of Mr. Llewelyn throughout the negociations.

"Mr. Brace pressed Mr. Callaghan as to the money value of the assurances, and in reply he said that they contain no money value, but were simply an expression of good faith and that where they found a man did a fair day's work they would pay a fair day's wage, but they refused to give a definite figure, only those mentioned by Mr. Llewelyn above, which I think you agree are very vague."

On July 3rd, Mr. Ashton replied :—

"I know that we differ as to the interpretation of the assurances contained in the terms of agreement, but you must not forget that the special conference of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain accepted our interpretation and pledged the Federation to see that that interpretation of the assurances was carried out."

In another letter to Mr. Harcombe, dated July 10th, Mr. Ashton wrote :—

"The question of fixing a national minimum wage for work in abnormal places will be discussed at the special conference on the 28th inst., and whatever conference decides the South Wales Federation will be expected to carry out. The national question cannot be mixed up with the Cambrian Combine dispute.

"The four miners' representatives who signed the agreement interpreted the assurance of a fair day's wage for a fair day's work to mean at least 6/9 per day, and delegates in supporting the resolution at special conference accepted this interpretation, and clearly pointed out that the Federation would be pledged to see that the assurance in the agreement must be carried out in accordance with that interpretation.

"Since the conference met I have been in correspondence with Mr. Richards, Mr. D. A. Thomas, and Mr. Dalziel, on this particular point, and I think it is now clear that the Managing Director of the Combrian Combine Collieries Company, and the South Wales Coalowners' Association, and myself, are now in agreement that the assurance means at least 6/9 per day.

"If you still have any doubt, let me prevail upon you to trust the Federation. The Federation is bound to see that the agreement is carried out in accordance with the interpretation placed upon the assurance by the officials of the Federation."

The last Card.

On Saturday, July 1st, another conference of the South Wales coalfield was held at Cardiff. It was presided over by Mabon, and attended

by 218 delegates representing 102,834 members. It reaffirmed its decision of May 27th rejecting the May settlement; authorised the Executive to call the levies necessary for the support of the workmen on strike (the levy was now raised from 2/- to 3/- per month); and undertook the responsibility of issuing a manifesto to the English and Scotch coalfields explaining the position in South Wales and of sending missionaries into those coalfields in support of a campaign for national action on the general minimum wage question. The manifesto was drawn up by two of the Socialist members of the Council, signed by Mr. T. Richards, the general secretary, and issued on July 8th. It described the position of the strikers as a "very desperate one," advocated an agitation for a minimum wage in preference to the abnormal places policy "as our long experience have convinced us that the cleverest scheme for trying to secure payment in abnormal places is so grievously defective that we can no longer hold out such as a policy as a remedy for the crying evils of the present," blamed the absence from the Wages Agreement of a minimum wage clause as the root cause of the trouble, and concluded with "an appeal for united and simultaneous action form all sections of the Federation." In so far as it concerned the Cambrian Combine strike that appeal was made in vain. The most favourable thing that can be said of the reception extended to the missionaries is that, to adopt a rather hackneyed phrase, it was a very mixed one; and at the national conference, held in London on July 28th and 29th, the Cambrian dispute was regarded as settled; the efforts made by the South Wales delegates to force national action on the general minimum wage question were again unsuccessful, and the decision arrived at on the abnormal places question was one asking the coalowners of the country for a national joint conference to consider the question of paying the district minimum rate of wages for working abnormal places, and, failing satisfaction authorising the Executive Council "to call another national conference to decide upon a ballot of all members of the Federation to ascertain if they are in favour of ceasing work until the district minimum wage is obtained."

This conference gave the strike its death blow, and by the end of August the Cambrian Combine workmen had agreed to resume work. As the terms of May 15th were detested by the strikers and were by no means to the liking of Mr. D. A. Thomas, a suggestion was made indirectly that different terms might be arranged if the workmen approached the Naval Company. That suggestion had the approval of Mr. D. A. Thomas, but it was not accepted by the Naval workmen; and the first official step in the direction of a return to work was a meeting of the Conciliation Board held at the request of the workmen's representatives, on Wednesday, August 9th. At that meeting Mr. F. L. Davis presided over the coalowners' representatives, and

Mr. W. Abraham, M.P., over the workmen's side. In placing the plea of the workmen's representatives before the Board, Mr. Abraham said there was a general desire felt for a resumption of work, and the workmen in the first place wished to know whether the owners would be prepared to set aside all previous settlements and to reopen negociations afresh? Mr. Davis, in reply, pointed out that the dispute had already been twice settled, namely, by himself and Mr. Abraham on October 22nd last, and by the owners' representatives and the Miners' Federation of Great Britain on May 15th last, and that both these settlements had been repudiated by the workmen. On these grounds the owners could not agree to a reopening of negociations. Replying to a hypothetical contingency suggested by Mr. Abraham as to whether, in the event of the workmen offering to accept the October settlement, the owners would agree to a resumption of work on the terms of that settlement, Mr. Davis said that the owners' representatives, in order to prove their desire for conciliation, would be willing to allow the workmen the choice of either of the two agreements. The workmen's representatives further pressed the owners to consider the following alternative methods of settling the dispute:—(1) The appointment of a small committee of the Conciliation Board; (2) the acceptance by the workmen of the arranged price-list for six months with a guaranteed fixed wage; and (3) the submission to arbitration of the difference between the rate of 2/1.3d. per ton fixed by the settlement of October and the rate of 2/6 per ton originally demanded by the workmen. To these proposals the owners' representatives replied that not one of them was acceptable, and could not even be discussed. The owners were only prepared to agree to a settlement upon the lines of the choice by the workmen of either of the October 22nd or May 15th agreements. The meeting ended without any understanding being arrived at, but the workmen's representatives decided to convene a meeting of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation for Saturday, August 12th.

Strikers given option of October or May Terms.

On Saturday, August 12th, the Executive Council met at Cardiff to consider the position in the light of the attitude adopted by the coalowners' representatives at the meeting of the Conciliation Board held on August 9th. A deputation from the Cambrian Combine Strike Committee attended, and the proceedings, which were characteristically tumultuous, were adjourned till August 14th. At that adjourned meeting a proposal urged by the members of the Strike Committee in favour of an immediate general stoppage in the South Wales coalfield was rejected unanimously by the members of the Council mainly on the

Leaders charged with rigid indifference.

grounds that the Federation had no funds to support a South Wales strike and that the only effective way of dealing with the abnormal places, question was by national action. Though preferring the May to the October terms the Council did not commit itself to a definite recommendation. It left the choice in the hands of the strikers themselves. The Council, however, advised the men to return to work, and at a mass meeting of the Cambrian Combine workmen held in the mid-Rhondda grounds on August 17th that advice was peevishly accepted. A mass meeting held the previous day was broken up by the bitter opposition of a section. Mr. Mark Harcombe was refused a hearing, while other members of the Combine Committee were subjected to much interruption. Mr. Watts Morgan, the miners' agent for the district, was insulted and hustled, and finally entered a friend's house. The opposition, however, proved but the last faint expiring struggle in a hopeless and discredited cause, and among those who advised the resumption of work were the local leaders themselves. The official report of the meeting of the 17th was in the following terms :—

> " A mass meeting of the Combine workmen was held on the Rhondda Ground this morning, Mr. William John presiding. Messrs. Vernon Hartshorn, Enoch Morrell, James Winstone, and Tom Lucas attended, and addressed the meeting on the recommendation of the Executive Council that the Combine men be advised to return to work. The following resolution was proposed and carried unanimously :—
>
> > " That the Combine workmen adopt the recommendation of the Executive Council to return to work, and further resolve that the foregoing be accepted under protest against those leaders who have been guilty of such frigid indifference towards the Combine workmen during this dispute."

What a contrast did the scene on the mid-Rhondda Grounds on the morning of August 17th, 1911, afford to that held on the same spot on Sunday afternoon, September 18th, 1910, when the Cambrian Combine workmen pledged themselves to a strike in support of the Naval Colliery workmen ! Then the demeanour of the thousands of miners who assembled in front of the platform was one of vociferous defiance of their employers and one of whole-hearted determination to fight the issues to a triumphant end ; now their demeanour was one of sullen dejection, and of a suppressed anger against those whom they considered responsible for their defeat, and of a greatly weakened, if not lost, faith in the power of orthodox trades unionism to redress wrongs.

Back to Work.

Only the formalities of employment now remained to be observed. On August 21st, Mr. D. Watts Morgan was authorised by the Executive Council

to interview Mr. Leonard Llewelyn to make the necessary arrangements; on August 22nd, Mr. Llewelyn, when seen by Mr. Morgan, declined to discuss matters with the Cambrian Combine Joint Committee, but arranged for an interview between Mr. D. A. Thomas and himself and the committees of the different collieries; and on August 23rd those interviews took place at the Cardiff offices of the Cambrian Combine. At those interviews Mr. Thomas refused to consent to even the smallest variation from the terms of October 1910, stating frankly as his reason that he wanted the men to appreciate the fact that in his view they gained nothing by the strike. He also declined to concede a request that the men who were at that moment doing the work of the strikers should be dismissed or employed in other directions. He further warned the workmen's representatives that any attempt to boycott the disputed seam would be resisted even if such resistance involved another year's strike, and that any man threatening an official or interfering with an official in the maintenance of the discipline of the collieries or in the discharge of his duties would receive short shift at the hands of the management.* The workmen's representatives were informed that the men might recommence work at once at the Cambrian, Glamorgan, and the Britannic Merthyr, but that at the Naval Colliery there was not a sufficient supply of pitwood available to permit an immediate resumption. Subsequently, when approached upon the matter, both Mr. Thomas and Mr. Llewelyn refused to countenance any effort to withdraw proceedings which had been taken against some of the strikers. Those proceedings solely concerned the police and the strikers. When these facts were reported to the general joint committee it was decided to abstain from returning to work at any of the pits till they were all in a position to start simultaneously. The delay, however, was only for a few days; and at 10 o'clock on the night of August 31st the strike was actually brought to an end by the return to work of the stokers and the ostlers—twelve months to the day from the date when the Ely pit men first came out. This decision to return to work coincided with the collapse of a despairing effort on the part of the Lower Rhondda colliers to precipitate a South Wales strike. On August 21st a mass

*At the Pontypridd Police Court, on October 17th, a haulier employed at the Cambrian Colliery, Clydach Vale, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for assaulting an assistant farrier who had reported him to the head farrier for alleged improper treatment of a pit horse. In consequence of this report, the haulier in question was removed to another part of the mine. The other hauliers resented this desciplinary measure, and as reinstatement was refused they struck work on Saturday, October 14th. On Monday, October 16th, the hauliers at the Glamorgan and Naval Collieries decided on a sympathetic strike, and on the following day effect was given to the decision at the Naval Colliery, but on the 18th work was resumed at both the Cambrian and Naval Collieries.

meeting of the miners employed at the Lewis Merthyr, Cymmer, Ynishir, and Wattstown collieries passed a resolution in favour of immediate action on the abnormal places and lower paid workmen; and when a deputation from this meeting failed to persuade the Executive Council of the South Wales Federation it appealed to the members of that organisation over the heads of the leaders, and on August 28th issued a manifesto convening an unofficial conference for September 2nd. The appeal, however, proved as abortive as all similar appeals had done during the period of strike in the mid-Rhondda, and on August 31st it was officially announced that owing to inadequate support it had been decided to abandon the proposed conference. The same day the strike levy was reduced to 1/- per month. Amicable relations were not immediately restored. At the Cambrian Combine collieries the Workmen's Committee resented the unrestricted freedom which the employers exercised in their employment of men seeking work; and attempted to limit the supply of labour by an intimation to workmen who had obtained temporary employment elsewhere to communicate with their respective lodges before giving up their jobs and returning to the district, and by the issue and exhibition of the following order:—

> "Important Notice to the Workmen of the Naval Collieries.
>
> "Every workman is requested to keep away from the top of the collieries and look out for the list of names which will be placed in the windows of the various branch lodges. Any man violating this instruction after this notice will answer for his conduct to a general meeting.—By order
>
> "THE COMMITTEE."

The list of names was that of the workmen whom the Committee had decided should return to work, and when the Committee found that these orders were not being obeyed by the miners themselves, and that the management at the Naval Colliery were employing master hauliers and other officials to do work on which they had not been engaged prior to the strike, the colliers threatened another strike on the ground that the management were giving undue preference to officials. A resolution to strike was proposed at a mass meeting held on September 6th; but it was withdrawn, and a deputation was appointed to see Mr. Llewelyn, who informed the workmen's representatives that the Company, though they did not intend to victimise a single workman, would certainly not throw out of work men who had stood by them during the strike, and were determined to manage the colliery in their own way. The threatened strike was abandoned; work was found for an increasing number of the strikers as the underground workings were brought into their normal condition; and by the end of October the total number of

men who had obtained re-employment represented 80 per cent. of the men who had struck work.

Up to the end of September the strike had meant a loss in wages to the Cambrian Combine workmen of nearly £800,000; while on the assumption that debts were accumulated at the rate of 4/6 per week per person in receipt of strike pay the total indebtedness incurred exceeded £90,000.

A careful and modest estimate places the aggregate cost of the Cambrian and Powell Duffryn strikes to the workmen in loss of wages and debts, to the South Wales Miners' Federation in strike payments and loss of revenue, to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain in subsidies to the Cambrian strikers, to the coalowners in indemnities, to the Glamorgan County Council in police cost and compensation, to the local Education authorities in providing free meals for the school children, and to the Government in grants to the Metropolitan forces and in the movement and maintenance of the military forces, and to the trade unions and the public generally in the form of strike grants or subscriptions to relief funds, at over £2,250,000. If we take into account the wages and other losses incurred in connection with the numerous other strikes, a cheque for £2,750,000 would hardly meet the bill of the labour struggles and civil disturbances in the South Wales coalfield between September, 1910, and October, 1911.

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

General Observations.—What the Cambrian Combine Strikers Gained.—The terms of May 15th Examined.—All its Material Benefits were embodied in the October 22nd Settlement.—The limitations of the Arbitration Principle.—The Conduct of the Strike.—Executive Council's Weakness.—The Conflicts between its Members.—Deep-rooted disagreements on economic questions.—The bearing on the strike of the Eight Hours Act and the Wages Agreement of 1910.—Legislation and increased cost of production.—Labour attempt to shift the burden of increased cost on the shoulders of the colliery owner or the consumer.—Fallacies of Miners' Leaders.—Comparative prices and relative efficiency as factors determining the demand for South Wales coal.—The Lessons of the Coal Export Duty.—The attitude of the Colliery Owners.—Discontent with diminished wages and with the terms of the 1910 Wages Agreement aid the Extreme or Socialist Leaders.—The Cambrian Struggle an epitome of general forces.—The Inactivity of the Older Leaders and the feverish activity of the Socialists.—Why the Socialists in the end secured ascendancy.—Cost of the Strikes to the South Wales Federation.—How the Colliery Owners were affected.—Course of prices and trade during the Strike.—The Imported Police Forces.—Their number and Cost.—Strike Prosecutions.—The Use of the Military.—The lessons of the mid-Rhondda disturbances to the Government.

General Observations.

Thus ended one of the most bitter, most irregularly and violently conducted, and most prolonged industrial conflicts in the history of the mining industry not only of South Wales but of Great Britain. In the manifesto issued on August 28th the Lower Rhondda miners stated that in the result of the Cambrian Combine strike "the Federation had encountered the greatest possible defeat." In a very large measure that statement is quite true. It is not by any means true if limited in its application to the mid-Rhondda miners. The conditions under which the strikers resumed work were not worse than those against which they had struck. The employers might have withdrawn the terms of October 22nd and May 15th; they might even have insisted on the acceptance by the strikers of lower

wage rates and less satisfactory working conditions than those in vogue when the strike began. Many cases might be mentioned where victorious employers of labour have adopted those courses. In this case, however, that was not done. The men were allowed to return to work in the full benefit of the terms they had previously rejected.

What the Strikers Gained.

It is a difficult task to set its true value on what the Cambrian Combine workmen gained by conciliation. The correspondence given in a previous chapter between Mr. Ashton and Mr. Harcombe shows a remarkable difference of opinion between the Secretary of the M.F.G.B. and the Secretary of the Workmen's Strike Committee as to the value of the settlement of May 15th; for while the one considered that those terms contained all the men had asked for and that they practically guaranteed a minimum wage of 6/9 per day to every man who did a fair day's work, the other considered they did nothing of the kind. The truth of the matter seems to lie somewhere between these two views. The assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas do not represent any new benefit to the miners gained as the result of the strike. They would have been readily given by the Naval Company without a stoppage; and in any case were orally given when the strike had only been a few weeks in progress. It is the custom of the coalfield to give the colliers allowances when they are unable to make up a fair day's wage owing to physical conditions in the working places. The Naval Company had no intention to depart from that custom. Their only determination was that those allowances should be made to bear a direct relation to the efficiency or inefficiency of the labour service rendered; and that in their amounts those allowances should be deprived of any uniformity that might act as an encouragement to ca'cannyism. The terms on which work was resumed in a very large measure secured the Company the freedom of action which they thus desired. The men, too, gained very little advantage in principle from the extra-conciliation machinery set up under Mr. Leonard Llewelyn's verbal undertaking of February 11th for dealing with disputes arising out of the allowances made to men employed in the Upper Five Feet Seam at the Ely Pit. That undertaking leaves all questions of management and discipline in the hands of the colliery manager. It does not, either, infringe the claim of the management to the right in the last resort to be the judges of what and what is not an abnormal place. Short of that infringement, however, it gives full and perhaps exceptional scope for the operation of the principle of private bargaining over wages, for it provides (1) for agreement between the workman and the local manager, or (2), failing that method, for agreement between the workman and the general manager, or (3), failing both, for agreement be-

tween the workman's trade union representative and the general manager after a personal visit by both to the place over which a dispute may have arisen. If these processes fail to bring about a settlement the workman or workmen may make the allowance made by the management a matter of dispute and claim the intervention of a joint committee of six members of the Conciliation Board, three from each side, and ask that committee to determine whether the workman or workmen "shall be receiving sufficient allowances in accordance with this agreement," and, if that committee fails to agree, then to call in the Independent Chairman, before whom and that committee the case or cases shall be fully discussed, and, in case of disagreement, the Independent Chairman "shall give his casting vote as to whether or not the assurances are being carried out." It will be seen that the Independent Chairman is not given the usual powers of an arbitrator. He is authorised to hear the merits of the dispute discussed by the parties to it, but he has no power to settle the dispute, his function being specifically restricted to that of deciding whether the undertaking to supplement low wages by allowances and to pay a fair day's wage for a fair day's work has been observed. The coalowners were so confident of the fairness with which on the whole the allowance custom was observed by the employers that they were quite willing for the intervention for a third party to listen to any complaints which the workmen might urge against its practice in a particular case.

The Cambrian Combine workmen, however, objected to these arrangements because in their opinion they were hedged round with so many conditions and limitations that the principle of arbitration which they seemed to embody in theory would be sterile in practice, and that in any case they were too cumbersome to be brought into operation. It is only right, however, to add that miners' representatives in other coalfields regarded the settlement of May 15th as one of the best bargains ever struck between Capital and Labour in the mining industry; so that whether what the settlement of May 15th contains beyond that secured under the settlement of October 22nd be definite and substantial (as it was thought to be by English and Scotch miners as well as by Mabon and T. Richards, M.P., and other leading members of the South Wales Miners' Federation), or visionary and impracticable as it was described to be by the strikers, it was common ground that the assurances of Mr. D. A. Thomas and Mr. Leonard Llewelyn and the conciliation machinery established as the result of the intervention of the M.F.G.B. were something additional to, and in no sense derogatory of, the terms of October 22nd.

Executive Council's Weakness.

Neither is the statement of the Lower Rhondda miners altogether just in its application to the Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation.

The Council, it is quite true, has a great deal to answer for. It was weak when it ought to have been strong; it vacillated when it ought to have acted with firmness and decision; it compromised when it ought to have been autocratic. Firmness of purpose and decisiveness in action on the part of executive authorities are as necessary in times of emergencies and crises under democratic as they are under despotic institutions. The Council either did not admit the virtue of these qualities; or, if it did admit such virtue, lacked the courage to clothe it in action. There is no room to doubt that several of its members had a perfectly clear notion of what the Council ought to have done. Its debility was due to it own dual-mindedness: and it would be hard to find a more striking illustration of the proverb that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

The strike in the mid-Rhondda occurred at a period when ideas concerning the relationship between Capital and Labour in the coalfield were undergoing a great change. Two schools of thought had arisen—one wedded to the principles of the older trade unionism, the other to the teachings of Communist Socialism. At the head of one of these schools were the pioneers of trade unionism in the coalfield—men like Mabon, who had grown grey in the service of labour and who, by their organising power and negociatory skill, had brought about great improvements in the wages and the working conditions of the miners of South Wales; while at the head of the other were men imbued with Marxian economic theories, who believed that in State ownership and control was to be found the panacea of most industrial evils, and who, possessed in many cases of rare rhetorical gifts, had secured a considerable enthusiastic and well-organised following. In many of the districts the Socialists, profiting from the unconcern of the majority of the workmen, had captured the control of the machinery of the lodges; but at the headquarters of the South Wales Miners' Federation their influence was as weak as their number was small, and by the older officials they were treated with more or less indifference.

Two powerful circumstances, however, came to the aid of the Socialists in the dissatisfaction of a large body of the workmen at the operation of the Eight Hours Act and with the terms of the Wages Agreement of 1910. The effect of the Eight Hours Act had been not only to reduce the average wage as well as the number of working hours, but also to provoke new and to aggravate old troubles. In the last three months of 1909—when the Act had been in operation six months—the average reduction in the output per person employed was 7.6 per cent. In some cases the reduction was lower, and in others much higher. It was highest in those colleries which, prior to the Act, were most highly organised, and were producing well up to their maximum capacity

In the case of the Cambrian and other large collieries it exceeded 13 per cent., and as colliers are in the main paid by output, and there had been no increase in the price-lists, their earnings suffered in proportion. Unskilled workmen who were paid day rates, but who worked a great deal of overtime, were also injured by the Act owing to the operation of the clause prohibiting overtime in mines except in cases of emergency. During the negociations over the new Wages Agreement in the spring of 1910 the workmen's representatives sought to shift these burdens on to the shoulders either of the colliery owner or of the trade as a whole by demanding an increase in the minimum wage rate from 30 per cent. to 40 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879, an extra payment for working small coal, a minimum wage to men employed in abnormal places equal to their earnings in normal places, the payment to men employed on afternoon or night shifts at the rate of six turns for five worked, and that no workmen employed in and about mines should be paid less than a standard of 3/4 per day plus percentages, which at that time would have given a rate of 5/- a day. During the negociations Mr. Brace stated the position of the workmen's representatives in the following words:—"The coalowners are trying to make the workmen and not the industry bear the increased cost. What earthly use is it for men to have anything by way of reform in the Eight Hours' Act or Compensation Act if they have to pay for it themselves? The intention of the legislature is that it is the industry must bear that. . . . It ought to be made a charge on the cost of production; and the industry bearing that charge should cover itself by an increased price from the public." Of the many fallacies underlying this statement it is only necessary to draw attention to one, viz., the assumption that it was commercially possible to shift all the increased cost on the consumer. Supreme though it may be in its steam raising and other qualities Welsh coal is after all a competitive commodity, and as such, under ordinary trade conditions, is subject, like other competitive commodities, though not perhaps altogether to the same degree, to the law of substitution. In the long run comparative prices and relative efficiency are the two main considerations which influence large consumers in the placing of their orders. Consumers are not likely to continue paying 17/- and 18/- per ton f.o.b. for Welsh steam coal when they can obtain coal from 15 per cent. to 20 per cent. inferior in quality at prices from 35 per cent. to 45 per cent. lower. The margin, indeed, need be very small in order to bring about a diversion of orders from the dearer to the cheaper market, and the workmen's representatives themselves have not been slow to use this argument when it has suited their purpose. The case of the export tax on coal is one in point. In the agitation of 1905 for the

Fallacies of Miners' Leaders.

repeal of that impost miners' leaders frequently urged that at least a portion of that tax, instead of being borne entirely by the foreigner, had been shifted on to the shoulders of the British miner in the form of a diminished wage. The two cases may not be entirely parallel. In the reduction of working hours under the Eight Hours Act, and in the social and material benefits accruable to miners and their families under the Compensation Act, there was the economic possibility of an increase in the efficiency of labour which might not only maintain the earnings of labour, but make the net profit of the colliery owner even greater than it was prior to the enforcement of those legislative enactments. It is true that in the South Wales coalfield that possibility promised more in theory than was likely to be realised in practice, and that the Eight Hours Departmental Committee of 1907 warned the Government of the day of the probable unequal incidence of an Eight Hours Day Act, and of the possible disturbing influence of such an Act on wages.* But even these theoretic benefits could not be claimed for the export duty; from its very nature that impost was an incident which accelerated the operation of the law of diminishing return rather than that of the law of increasing return; but the element common to both was the saddling of a greater cost on the production and the marketing of coal.

With these considerations in their minds the South Wales coalowners resisted the demands of the miners. In regard to some of the demands made by the workmen a compromise was arranged, but none of them was granted in its entirety, while among those waived by the workmen's representatives were the demands relating to abnormal places and the lower paid day-wage men. The Socialist leaders resisted an Agreement which left these matters unsettled; one or two of them withheld their signatures for some weeks after it had been ratified by a ballot of the whole coalfield; and

*NOTE.—"In those districts in which the hours are longest, such as South Wales and Lancashire, it is clear that by no re-arrangement of their time or improvement in the regularity of attendance, could the hewers put in the same number of hours underground, or produce the same number of tons under the present mining conditions, or earn the same wages at the existing tonnage rates, as they are able to do at present. In such districts they would be faced with the question whether for the sake of improvement in their conditions of labour they would be willing, or perhaps compelled, to accept a somewhat reduced weekly wage. If they were not so willing, and were to demand a revision of the basis of their wages, it would appear probable, considering the extensive character of the miners' organisations, that the movement for higher wages would be general throughout the coalfields of the United Kingdom. . . . We are of opinion that in framing the details (of such a measure) or any regulations necessary for its administration, special regard should be paid to the conditions of the industry in South Wales and Lancashire." (Report of Departmental Committee on an Eight Hours Working Day in Mines, 1907).

during the summer of 1910 they were engaged in a persistent and not over-scrupulous attempt to repudiate the Agreement, to discredit the leaders who had advised its acceptance, and to declare a general strike. The seething unrest which this campaign produced led to many minor disputes, and in September culminated in a violent revolt in the mid-Rhondda district against the policy of the older leaders that in its origin and purpose was as political and personal as it was industrial, and epitomised the disrupting and anarchical forces at work in the coalfield. That revolt might have been suppressed had the Council dealt with it firmly and enforced authorised penalties against contumacy; but under circumstances related in an earlier chapter it temporised by agreeing to call a conference of the whole coalfield to deal with the mid-Rhondda trouble. That conference gave the recalcitrants their opportunity, and from that moment the Socialist members on the Council fought the other members tooth and nail. The older and more moderate members never gave way entirely. In spite of the activities of the Socialists they had a strong body of opinion behind them in the coalfield; and their opposition to the demand for a South Wales or a national strike on the general minimum wage question was effective. What these men failed to do in South Wales they did in London through the agency of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and it is a tribute to the inherent strength of their views that throughout the whole period of the stoppage they received the almost unanimous support of the English and Scotch members of the national body. The views of the rest of the miners of the country were not the views of the extreme section of the South Wales Federation; yet the views of this extreme section became the views of the conferences, and once they had become the views of the conferences they moulded the policy of the Executive Council. The fatal weakness of the course pursued by the moderate section of the Council was its heedlessness on the one hand of the growing strength and activity of the Socialist movement and its distrust on the other of the power of the silent member of the Federation. The silent member had shown what power he was capable of exercising when he defeated the proposal for a general stoppage in September, 1910: but instead of trusting in this power and opposing outspokenly on public platforms measures which they were privately convinced could only lead to disaster the moderates neglected it, and left all the public campaigning to men who were avowedly determined "to move them on or to kick them out." Now and again a still small voice of protest was heard by unofficial members, but except on November 2nd when Mabon, T. Richards, and A. Onions issued a manifesto against the Aberdare Valley strikers, and when Mabon, in June,

Why the Socialists Won.

1911—8 months later—raised his voice in strong opposition to the resolution advocating a strike on the general minimum wage question passed at a conference of the South Wales Miners Federation and described the policy of the conference as one of "starvation and despair," the silent members of the Federation were never once given a strong, uncompromising lead on the side of constitutional conduct. The moderate members allowed themselves to be dragooned into acquiescence with the rejection of the October terms; in the so-called "interests of the Cambrian men" they maintained a rigid public silence on matters of vital interest to the miners of the coalfield and which, if the miners had known, would have profoundly influenced the course of the Cambrian strike*; conference decisions with which they fundamentally disagreed they submissively carried into effect; and then stood by helpless witnesses of the havoc done to the Federation in particular, and to the cause of trades unionism in general, by the Cambrian strike and by these conference decisions. The result was that the silent member was as disgusted with the weakness of one set of leaders as he was estranged by the extremes of the other, and that he became sullenly indifferent as to the issue of the struggle. The loss of his support was the death-knell of the power of the moderates. In February, 1911, the Socialists captured four seats on the Council; in March they made it clear that Mabon's presidency of the Federation was insecure; and in October, in a ballot of the members of the Federation for seats on the Executive Council of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and for other national appointments, they carried everything before them. On the national Executive, Mr. T. Richards, M.P. (the secretary of the South Wales Federation), Mr. Alfred Onions (the treasurer), and Mr. W. Brace (the vice-president)—who with Mabon had sat on the national Council since the South Wales Miners' Federation became affiliated to the national body—were displaced by Messrs. C. B. Stanton, Vernon Hartshorn, and Mr. George Barker; for the American delegation Mr. C. B. Stanton secured an easy victory over Mr. T. Richards; and on the International Committee Mr. Stanton

*NOTE.—In an interview reported in the "Western Mail" on June 15th, Mabon, referring to the silent assent given by the Naval workmen's representatives to his acceptance of the October 22nd terms, said:—"I have refrained from vindicating myself simply and solely in the interests of the Cambrian men. When in December last I delivered a speech at the Rhondda District of miners, and felt it incumbent upon me to speak out, the delegates present realised that if that speech were reported and the whole thing exposed the hope of support for the Mid-Rhondda men and the innocent sufferers would be gone. Some of the delegates pointed out that its publication would make it impossible to collect the levies made for the support of the strikers from the lodges if the facts as given by me were disclosed. I restrained myself, and allowed the opportunity for the disclosure to go. My reputation, therefore, is only tarnished to the extent of my own immolation."

also ousted Mabon.* Two days after his defeat in the national Executive ballot, Mr. Brace wrote to the secretary of the Monmouthshire Western Valley District stating that he regretfully assumed he no longer possessed the confidence of the majority of the district, and had no alternative but to resign his position as its advisory agent—a position which he had held for 21 years.† The moderates had lamentably failed to rise to the occasion; and they suffered the common fate of leaders who lacked the courage to lead. Thus, though the South Wales Council must be held collectively responsible for all its executive acts, it will be seen that those acts were the outcome of the deliberations of a Council distracted by internal differences and held in the bondage of a rebel faction.

Cost of the Strikes to South Wales Miners' Federation.

With these qualifications the taunt of the Lower Rhondda miners expresses accurately the opinion of the general body of the workmen on the result of the struggle. To the South Wales Federation as an organisation the failure of the Cambrian Combine strike was by far the worst blow it has suffered since its formation. Practically every one of the measures to which it was committed by the advocacy of the fervid but ill-advised and little experienced Socialist leaders was defeated; its conduct alienated the sympathies of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain to such an extent as to forfeit the moral and financial assistance of that great organisation; and not only dissipated in a fruitless enterprise funds which it had taken a 13 years' chequered effort to accumulate, but imposed on its members burdens which some resisted and which many found difficult and a few impossible to bear. What the "cash nexus" of the Cambrian strike failure meant to the Federation may be judged from the following facts:—At the beginning of 1910 the central funds of the Federation amounted to £123,011; by December 1910, owing mainly to the mid-Rhondda stoppage, they had dwindled to £70,348. At the end of January, 1911, the M.F.G.B. came to the assistance of the local Federation with a grant of £3,000 a week. That grant was maintained for 25 weeks, and thus involved a total grant of £75,000 from the earnings of the English and Scotch miners. Even with the aid of this substantial contribution the funds of the Feder-

* In the March delegate election for the Presidency of the South Wales Federation the voting was as follows:—Mabon, 1,688; George Barker, 1,266. In the M.F.G.B. elections the ballot results were:—National Executive (3 seats):—Elected—Hartshorn, 20,543; Stanton, 20,497; Barker, 20,181; non-elected—Brace, 18,244; Richards, 12,987; Winstone (Socialist), 12,802; Onions, 11,834. American delegation (1 seat):—Elected—Stanton, 27,008; Mr. T. Richards, 11,463. International Committee (1 seat):—Stanton, 27,117; Mabon, 13,450. The voting showed the strength and vitality of the Socialist party, but was not representative of the Federation membership.

† On November 20th, 1911, by 17 votes to 8 the local Council decided not to accept the resignation, and Mr. Brace then withdrew it.

ation became utterly inadequate to cope with the strike demands, and to meet the Federation needs the members were called upon to pay—in addition to their ordinary contribution of 1/- per lunar month, and the strike levy of 1/- per month imposed in November, 1910—a further strike levy of 1/- from February to June, making a strike levy of 2/- per month, and during July and August, 1911, another 1/- levy brought the strike charge to no less than 3/- per month. In the aggregate these levies had involved a demand up to the end of August of 18/- per member, and as the levy was retained at 2/- during September the gross sum which each member of the Federation was asked to contribute during the 11 months ending September, 1911, towards the cost of the strikes was exactly £1. The response, however, to these levy demands was very unsatisfactory—so unsatisfactory that the Executive Council was compelled to instruct the lodges to pay out of their local funds the strike levies due from but unpaid by their members. Even at the end of the strike the arrears amounted to a very considerable sum. The cost of the Cambrian and other strikes for the six months ending June was £152,000, which, with the sum of £93,173 paid out in strike pay and strike grants during 1910 mainly owing to the autumn stoppages at the Cambrian Combine, Aberdare, Cilely, Gelli, and Cwmtillery collieries, brought the total strike expenditure at that date to £245,173. During July and August the Cambrian Combine workmen continued to draw strike pay at the rate of about £4,300 per week, equal to a total sum from July to the date of the settlement of the dispute of over £38,000. The 800 men idle at the Gelli and smaller numbers at other collieries were also on the funds of the Federation during this period, and official figures show that during the 20 months ended September, 1911, the aggregate amount paid out in strike pay and in grants (including the £75,000 received from the M.F.G.B.) exceeded £300,000, and that of this grand total the Cambrian Combine workmen had received at least about £200,000 by the end of August, 1911, or on an average over £22 per strike member in benefit

But the financial burden of the Cambrian Combine strike was not entirely removed by the resumption of work. As was the case in the Aberdare strike a large number of men remained unemployed for some weeks after the collieries had been re-opened, and during that period they continued to draw from the funds of the Federation at the same rate as they had done while the strike was in progress. When everything is taken into account it is estimated that the Cambrian strike alone cost the South Wales Miners' Federation over £225,000.

The exhaustion of its financial resources was not the only great consequence of the Cambrian and the other strikes to the South Wales Miners' Federation. That struggle left the organisation as

enfeebled in prestige and authority as in finance. Though one of the largest of the branches of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain the South Wales branch became one of the least influential in the councils of the national body. The indifference displayed by many of its leaders towards their obligations under the provisions of the Wages Agreement, the contempt so frequently shown by them towards the principle of collective bargaining, and the dilution of the principle of representative power, weakened their negociatory power with the coalowners to a point almost of nullity ; while so relaxed became the allegiance of its own members that the number in benefit at the end of September, 1911, was thousands less than it had been at any other period since 1902. Such was the devastated heritage of the strike to the South Wales Miners' Federation.

How the Coalowners were affected.

How different the consequences of the strikes to the South Wales Coalowners' Association ! The total cost of the mid-Rhondda, Aberdare Valley and other stoppages to the associated coalowners was the largest in the history of the Association. The indemnities were raised by levies on outputs, and so completely, it is understood, were those levies paid up that they were sufficient to meet the indemnities due to the owners of the idle collieries without drawing a penny from the Capital fund. The aggregate loss of output was estimated at between $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $3\frac{3}{4}$ million tons, of which the Cambrian Combine loss was about $2\frac{3}{4}$ million tons. The coal, however, remained in the ground, and its production was only deferred. Between the price at which it would have been supplied during the period of the strike and that at which it was sold after the strike there was a slight difference, but the indemnities which they received from the Association are understood to have been sufficient to leave the individual colliery companies a margin for profit after meeting maintenance and repairing charges, though that profit was not what would have accrued had the collieries of the indemnified owners been working. How far the colliery owners were assisted in the payment of their levies by the effect on prices of the restriction of at least $3\frac{1}{2}$ million tons in the output of the Rhondda and Aberdare Valleys it is impossible to say. What it is possible to affirm is the fact that that restriction did not lead to an advance in the average price of large coal to the coalowner. It is true that the price of best admiralty coal—the class produced at the Cambrian Collieries —advanced two to three shillings a ton (in August, 1910, they were quoted at from 16/- to 16/6, and in June, 1911 at from 18/6 to 19/- per ton); but this rise affected only the margin of supply not contracted for when the strike commenced. In the aggregate that margin was small, as in the usual course contracts had been entered into which absorbed the great bulk of the potential outputs. It

is this fact which explains why, during the period of the strike there was very little movement in the average selling price of large coal. What movement there was was in a downward direction, as the following official figures show :—June quarter, 1910, 14/10.42 per ton ; September quarter, 1910, 14/10.07 ; December quarter, 1910, 14/9.31 ; March quarter, 1911, 14/8.42 ; June quarter, 1911, 14/8.35. The price tendency of small coals was slightly more favourable. Before the strike began the demand, though not up to the productive capacity of the coalfield, had been improving. For the 1910 June and September quarters the exports were larger than they had been at any time since the Eight Hours Act came into force, and were even better than they were in the corresponding quarters in 1908—one of the best years in the history of the trade. The strike gave a sharp check to that improvement. Orders were diverted partly to the other Welsh collieries, but mainly to other British as well as to foreign coalfields. The collieries at work in the South Wales coalfield in most cases increased their outputs, but not sufficiently to balance the strike restriction, and for the twelve months ending August, 1911, the actual loss in the export trade was between $1\frac{3}{4}$ and 2 million tons. The potential loss, assuming the continuance of the rate of expansion during the preceding three years, was over $3\frac{1}{2}$ million tons. These conditions may have retarded the downward tendency of prices. The fact that seven weeks after work had been resumed at the Cambrian Combine collieries the current market prices of best Welsh steam coal were quoted at from 16/3 to 16/6 per ton f.o.b. as compared with 18/6 to 19/- in the last week of the strike would appear conclusive on this point. The price movements of Welsh steam coal are always disproportionate to the variations in supply or demand. A 5 per cent shortage in supply under a prompt or very short-period demand pressure may easily cause a rise of from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent. in the current quotations of the best steam coal ; and a 5 per cent. shortage in demand, coinciding with a dearth of prompt tonnage, may quite as easily produce considerably more than a 5 per cent. fall in current quotations. But the fact of a 2/- fall is not as conclusive as it appears on the surface. In the autumn of each year the current prices of Welsh coals are subject to other factors capable of influencing prices. The period between the end of August and the beginning of December is that during which most of the big annual or half-yearly contracts are concluded, and for this reason is just the period when market " bear " influences are in most active operation. Yet when every allowance has been made for the price-depressing tactics of buyers it is very probable that the downward movement which had set in before the strike began would have proceeded at a more rapid rate but for the restriction in supply due to the strikes, and that those stoppages, therefore, were a source of indirect benefit

not only to the other collieries, but also, and to a greater extent, to contractors and middlemen. To express these benefits in average money terms is impossible. For that purpose the data are too incomplete ; yet the known facts are complete enough to justify the statement that on the whole the strikes yielded the average coalowner during the period covered by them a better price than he would otherwise have obtained for his free coal ; and that the Coalowners' Association emerged from the struggle at least as strong financially as it was when the stoppages began in September, 1910.

In its conduct of the strike the Coalowners' Association was guided solely by the principle of fidelity to its engagements. It followed this principle no less rigidly in its disciplinary relationships towards its own members than it did in its insistence on the part of the workmen of their obligations under the provisions and customs of the Conciliation Board Agreement.

The Imported Police Forces.

During the labour disturbances in the coalfield police contingents were drafted into the disturbed districts from no less than 21 county or borough police forces. The Home Office sent down 902 Metropolitan officers and men, and the other cities, towns, and counties from which assistance was drawn were Cardiff, Swansea, Bristol, Brecon, Gloucester, Merthyr, Monmouth, Carmarthen, Devon, Neath, Worcester, Cardigan, Lancashire, Somerset, Carnarvon, Warwick, North Riding, Derbyshire, Hertford, and Newport. Glamorgan county itself supplied 260 men. The largest number on duty on any one day was 1,254, excluding local officers and men who numbered about 250. This large combined force was on duty on November 13th. The imported men on that day consisted of 902 Metropolitans, 61 from Bristol, 43 from Swansea, 50 from Cardiff, 45 from Carmarthen, and 153 from various divisions of the Glamorgan county. They were distributed as follows :—Tonypandy district, 698 ; Aberaman district, 382 ; Bridgend district 125. In the mid-Rhondda district the largest number of imported constables on duty on any one day was 750 on November 14th. On November 6th the total number of imported constables—all county men—in the mid-Rhondda district was 46. On November 7th the number was 214 ; and on the night of the 8th November, when Tonypandy was sacked, the number of men on duty before the arrival late at night of the Metropolitans was only 244. On the night of November 21st the total number in the Aberdare and Rhondda Valleys was 1,102, of whom 721 were stationed in the mid-Rhondda district, and were engaged in the suppression of the Penygraig disorders. After that date the imported police were steadily withdrawn, and the last of the Metropolitans returned to London on February 11th. The action of the Home Secretary in sending down foot and mounted police when military had been requisitioned by the local magistrates,

and his statement in Parliament that he proposed that the cost of the Metropolitans should be met by the Glamorgan county authorities, had led to disagreements on the question of financial responsibility between the County Standing Joint Committee and Mr. Secretary Churchill, and after the last Metropolitan had left the Chief Constable was instructed not to apply for any further assistance from London. After their arrival the Metropolitan men and their mounts were housed and fed by the Powell Dyffryn Company at Aberaman and by the Cambrian Combine Companies in the mid-Rhondda district. On November 10th, Messrs. C. & W. Kenshole, solicitors, wrote to the Home Secretary on behalf of the Powell Dyffryn Company asking for an assurance that their clients would be reimbursed their expenses and threatening to discontinue providing for the men and their horses in the absence of such an assurance. On the 12th November the Home Secretary replied that he "assumed the police authority of the county to whose assistance the police have been sent will bear the cost of their accommodation." The Company in reply asked for a less vague assurance and said they had warned the Chief Constable that unless they were given the necessary assurance before Monday, November 14th, he "must make his own arrangements for the maintenance of the force." Arrangements were made between the Company and the Chief Constable under which the police continued to be housed and fed at the Aberaman Colliery offices. A similar difficulty arose over the cost of the police in the mid-Rhondda district, where the Cambrian Combine Companies in July, 1911, discontinued the provisioning of the police. After that it was undertaken by the county authorities. The claims of the two colliery concerns exceeded £25,000. In the 1911 Session the Home Secretary introduced a Bill for the purpose of making the local authorities responsible for the cost of the imported police, but it was not proceeded with in that Session, and the responsibility for the payment of expenses incurred by the colliery companies has not yet been definitely settled between the Government and the County Authorities. All the imported police received extra pay for the periods they were on strike duty. In the case of the Metropolitans the Home Office on November 11th sanctioned as a temporary measure the following payments over and above the customary pay and allowances, to be limited to the first ten days of their employment outside the Metropolitan police district: constables, 7/- a day; sergeants, 9/6 a day; inspectors, 12/- a day; sub-divisional inspectors, 15/- a day; chief inspectors, £1 a day; superintendents, £1 10s. a day. These special allowances were subsequently extended beyond the first ten days of duty in South Wales at half the rates mentioned. No extra pay was allowed the Glamorgan County police. At the end

Responsibility for Cost of Police.

of September the total amount paid out by the county authorities was £27,800; but at that date it was estimated that the total cost represented by what the County itself had defrayed in police charges and compensation, by the claims of the colliery companies, and by the cost of the Metropolitans and the military to the State, exceeded £110,000.

Strike Prosecutions.

It is symptomatic of the state of terrorism which prevailed in the strike areas during the earlier phases of the struggle that hardly any arrests were made. Over the whole period of the mid-Rhondda strike it was only on three occasions that the local magistrates were called upon to deal with intimidation cases, and the first of these was not decided till December 6th. The chief causes of the immunity of the law-breakers from prosecution were the license permitted the strikers in the execution of their picketting plans, the numerical weakness of the civil forces in the streets owing to the concentration of the police at or near the idle collieries, the refusal of strike sympathisers to assist the police in proving cases against offenders, and the fears of the victims themselves that if they came forward and gave evidence against the strikers they and their families would be still more mercilessly punished. After the riots of November 21st, however, measures were taken to interpret more strictly the letter of the law. On November 22nd the Home Secretary telegraphed General Macready:—"Cases of intimidation clearly going beyond peaceful persuasion. . . . . The police should not hesitate to make arrests where prima facie evidence is disclosed . . . . . there must be a regular process of bringing offenders, particularly rioters and thieves, to justice." Though they were not strong enough in numbers to enforce these orders in every case the police became far more active in prosecution after the desperate rioting at Penygraig on November 21st, than they had been previously, and between December, 1910, and September, 1911, over 500 offenders had been brought before the magistrates. Most of the accused were sentenced to the payment of fines—which in many cases are stated to have been paid from trade union funds—but many of them were sent to prison, the heaviest sentence being one of four months' hard labour. The following statement shows the strike prosecutions in the Cambrian Combine district:—

Return shewing the number of Prosecutions instituted in connection with the mid-Rhondda Strike, 1910-1911.

Total No. of persons prosecuted.	No. of persons convicted for intimidation	No. of persons convicted for assaulting the Police.	No. of persons convicted for other offences.
537	16 "A"	88 "B"	318 "C"

"A" Includes	2	Committed for trial	at Assizes for Riot.
"B" ,,	1	,,	at Assizes for Wounding.
"C" ,,	6	,,	at Quarter Sessions for Unlawful Wounding.
"C" ,,	4	,,	at Quarter Sessions for Grievous Bodily Harm.
"C" ,,	1	,,	at Assizes for uttering a Forged Strike Pay Ticket.

In the Aberdare district only 22 persons were prosecuted and convicted. They did not include a single case of intimidation. At the Glamorgan County Assizes, on November 23rd, 1911, the two men committed for riot were sentenced by Justice A. T. Lawrence to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour and the person convicted of wounding to nine months' imprisonment. The two prisoners convicted of rioting were leading members of the Strike Committee and one of them a member of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, and in passing sentence upon them Justice Lawrence said: "You have been convicted of rioting on the plainest evidence and under circumstances which indicate that you did it deliberately and with full knowledge of the consequences of what you were doing. There had been a state of unrest and turmoil in the county for months, and you had been prominent men with all the facts fully before you. . . . The only excuse that I have been able to see for your conduct anywhere is in the temptations which the Act under which you pretended to be acting holds out to ignorant people. That statute seems framed by human motive, as it is now, to provoke rioting and promote civil war. With these facts all before you you deliberately committed these crimes, and it is left to the unfortunate criminal courts of the country to protect the public from it. It is a most painful task to have to send men of your intelligence to punishment; but it must be done.

Somebody must have the courage to prevent this state of things." On the same day Justice Lawrence sentenced 19 other prisoners to imprisonment with hard labour for periods of from three to twelve months for rioting, intimidation by violence, and assault during the Swansea Valley riots at the Tareni colliery of the South Wales Primrose Coal Company.

Use of the Military.

Few things are more noteworthy on the military side of the South Wales 1910-11 strikes than the contrast between the policy of non-intervention adopted at the beginning of the strike and that of active support followed in the suppression of the later riots. Discussing with the representatives of the Cambrian Combine and the Powell Duffryn Companies on November 11th the general role which would be followed by the troops, General Macready informed them that " active measures would only be taken in the event of the civil police having exhausted all their available resources." The first serious rioting after that declaration of policy was that which took place at Tonypandy and Penygraig on November 21st. At 9.50 p.m. that night General Macready was informed that all the reserve police had been turned out from the police headquarters ; it was after 11 p.m., when the police forces had got the upper hand, that the first soldier arrived near the scene of the fighting. Some time after 10 o'clock General Macready ordered Major Freeth to proceed with a half company from Clydach Vale to Penygraig, and at 11.30 Major Freeth reported to General Macready " that when he arrived near Penygraig he found a thick crowd stoning the police. On seeing the soldiers the crowd gave way a bit and he told them to clear off." Mr. Moylan's reference to the work of the troops that night were in the following terms :—" The detachment of 50 infantry under Major Freeth did not proceed further than the Naval Pit at the south end of Tonypandy just beyond the railway station. They found the Metropolitan police there being stoned, but on their arrival the strikers commenced to disperse. The infantry ascended the hill and patrolled for a short time the ground above the positions which had been occupied by the stoners, and then returned to their quarters at Llwynypia, being subjected to some stoning on their arrival there, but without suffering any injury." In his report to the Home Secretary the Chief Constable added that on their way back to Llwynypia the troops " dispersed all the pickets, whose camp fires they destroyed on their way." Other infantry and cavalry arrived near the scene of fighting when the tumult had been suppressed and the police were returning to their quarters. It will be seen that in the military policy which he pursued on this occasion General Macready was as good as his word, and the impression left on the minds of the constables by the conduct of the military authorities that night and on other occasions was that " the exhaus-

tion of all their available resources" meant the exhaustion not only of the numbers of the local and of the reserve police forces but the physical exhaustion of practically every member of those forces. In the suppression of actual rioting they gave up hope of active assistance from the troops. After November 21st, however, the fact was driven home to the military and Home Office authorities that the exigencies of the local situation could not be ignored, and on November 25th a police force of 50 to 60 was supported by 100 men and four officers of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, a half company of the Lancashire Fusiliers, a half company of the West Riding Regiment and five troops of cavalry in protecting the Gilfach Goch Colliery while the boiler fires were being lighted by colliery officials. This parade of armed force, though not ordered to suppress a disturbance, prevented rioting, and marked the beginning of the departure from the policy adopted in London before the authorities there knew the difficulties of the situation with which they had to deal.

Home Office Policy Radically Changed.

In the first week in January, 1911, the command of the troops was handed over to Major Freeth, and General Macready returned to the War Office on January 6th. Between November 21st and that date there had been no serious rioting in the mid-Rhondda district, and in a Government letter of thanks the Home Secretary wrote of General Macready :—" For a period of nearly two months he has controlled a situation of great difficulty, and, by his disposition of the armed forces under his command and of the police, he has successfully avoided any conflict between the strikers and the military." After the departure of General Macready there were several serious disturbances, notably in March, May, and July, and on at least three occasions the troops were called up to actively assist the civil forces both in the actual suppression and in the prevention of riotous proceedings. The first of these occasions was on March 24th, when Capt. Hall and 40 men of the Royal Munster Fusiliers were called up from Gilfach Goch to aid the police in subduing disorders at Blaenclydach ; the second was on July 25th, when Major Thickness and a company of the Somerset Light Infantry—which regiment had in April replaced the Royal Munsters and the Lancashire Fusiliers—enveloped a large crowd of rioters from the mountain side at Penygraig and drove them into the streets of the town, where they were charged and dispersed by the police ; and on July 26th, when a detachment of infantry under Major Thickness occupied an almost precipitous rock overhanging the Clydach Vale Colliery—the key of the position at the Cambrian Colliery—against a threatened attack, and when Major Thickness later in the day sent one body of 30 men to assist the police in the suppression of rioting at Blaenclydach, and afterwards another

detachment to Llwynypia as a precautionary measure against an attack on the Glamorgan Colliery. In not one of these cases was the need for military support anything like as great as it was on November 7th, 8th, and 21st; in not one of them, too, had the policy of the exhaustion of the civil forces been enforced as a preliminary condition to the employment of the troops; while in each case the presence of the soldiers either prevented rioting or led to an immediate restoration of peace and order. Not a shot was fired by the troops during the whole period of the strike.

Coalowners view justified.

On November 10th, it will be recalled, the South Wales Coalowners' Association wrote to the Home Secretary protesting against the delay which had occurred in the sending of the troops and attributing the serious rioting of November 7th and 8th to the lack of a sufficiently protective force. Two days later the Home Secretary replied that he was "unable to accept the view that a premature display of military force would have had the effect of preventing the rioting. . . . . It is not unlikely that it might have had precisely the opposite effect." The facts of the strike undoubtedly go a long way to justify the complaint of the coalowners and to discredit the fear of the Home Secretary; while if the experience of the defence of the Britannic Merthyr Colliery at Gilfach Goch, where a strong military force was kept in permanent service after November 25th, is to count for anything, it counts for a great deal in support of the view that had the collieries been placed under the protection of the military and the police forces been left to maintain the peace in the streets cases of assaults and intimidation would have been much less numerous and the whole course and duration of the strike might have been entirely different. In his interview with Mr. D. A. Thomas on November 21st, General Macready, discussing the use of the police, mentioned the Britannic and Glamorgan collieries as "being calculated to absorb the greatest possible number of defenders with the least possible result." Though not intended as such, this statement fully explains the failure of the authorities to secure the subject in his industrial liberty. The Home Office plan of campaign in the earlier days of the strike involved the maximum of trouble and cost and yielded the minimum results. Its measures overlooked the fact that it was not with the sporadic violence of small bodies of disorganised and irresponsible strikers that they had to deal with, but with the dangers of a virtual insurrection on the part of a community under the tyrannous control by a recalcitrant section of one of the largest trade unions in the country.* It would appear, however, that the lessons of Tonypandy

*NOTE.—Reporting in October, 1911, to the Glamorgan County Standing Joint Committee in support of a scheme for the augmentation of the county police forces, Chief Constable Lindsay wrote that during the strike the police had to cope with "12,000 strikers always ready to do mischief."

had not been taught in vain, for during the seamen's and railway strikes and the South Wales anti-Jewish riots of July and August, 1911, the military were employed practically without any regard to the policy of first exhausting the police forces. During the anti-Jewish riots at Rhymney the rioting was suppressed almost exclusively by the military at the point of the bayonet.

CHAPTER X.

ABNORMAL PLACES AND MINIMUM WAGE.

Main Indirect Result of Cambrian Strike.—Impetus to Minimum Wage Movement.—Crux of Abnormal Places Problem.—Causes of Friction.—South Wales Miners and Judge Bryn Roberts' judgment.—Efforts to Surmount the difficulties created by that judgment.—Workmen's Demand for a guaranteed Minimum Wage.—Mr. Brace's defence of that demand.—Why the Coalowners Opposed it.—Importance of producing clean large coal.—Tonnage Rates intended to remunerate services in providing small as well as large coal.—The Commercial aspect of the problem.—Coalowners contend that the minimum wage principle is bad in principle and practice.—Their reasons for this contention.—Diminution in outputs per person employed.—Ca'Cannyism.—Growth in Cost of Labour.—Mechanical improvements counterbalance increased working difficulties.—Relation of Wages to Outputs.—High Wage Rates coincident with Low Outputs and Low Wage Rates with High Outputs. —Workmen's proposal and Employers' counter proposal to deal with Abnormal Places.—The withdrawal of workmen's demand.—The Question made a National One.—M.F.G.B. Conferences.—Employers Advocate Sectional Treatment.—Joint consideration by representative Conference of Colliery Owners and Workmen's Representatives.—Joint Conference proves abortive. —The suggested Solutions of the Difficulty.—National Conference of Miners decide on National action for a Minimum Wage irrespective of Abnormal Places.—The difference between the Minimum Wage Demand and the Percentage Minimums.—Note on Recent Negociations.

Though the 1910-11 strikes in the South Wales coalfield failed in their immediate purpose, they had one very far-reaching consequence. They gave to the movement in favour of the establishment of a minimum wage for colliers employed in abnormal places a stimulus which, with dramatic swiftness, transformed a problem of local, and, largely, of academic, interest into one of urgent national importance, which eventually led to the absorption of the ab-abnormal places, demand by the larger demand for a guaranteed minimum wage to all colliery workmen. The Cambrian Combine dispute was specially instrumental in bringing about this change. When the strike of the mid-Rhondda collieries was sanctioned in September, 1910, some of the members of the South Wales Executive, notably Mr. Vernon Hartshorn, condemned such local action on the ground that in sectional strikes the financial as well as the economic advantage lay with the employers, and that the more effective way to attempt a settlement of such issues as those involved in the Naval Colliery trouble was along the lines of national action for a minimum wage. How far in advance of the views of his colleagues were those of Mr. Hartshorn may be judged from the fact

that at the meeting of the Cambrian Combine workmen held at the mid-Rhondda Athletic Grounds, on September 18th, 1910, when they decided to strike in sympathy with the Naval Colliery workmen, Mr. Hartshorn was derided for attempting "to bring about the millenium in a day." In the course of less than 12 months, however, the Hartshorn view became the official policy of the South Wales Miners' Federation, and shortly afterwards the policy of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

The crux of the abnormal places problem lies in the differences in the wage yielding value of a price-list under the changing physical conditions of a coal seam. The physical features of a seam are rarely if ever precisely uniform. The general character of a seam of coal is as a rule as well-known to the collier as to the manager, and when a price-list is agreed upon it is mutually understood that it will be applicable to a certain minimum range of differences in the physical condition of the seam. For example, the physical variation of a seam does not necessarily become abnormal if the thickness increases or decreases a few inches; the price-list remains applicable to such changes. But cases arise in the working of a seam where in physical changes due to the presence of soft coal, faults, rolls, and other unusual conditions make it unreasonable to expect a collier to produce an average output, and where, therefore, the tonnage rate does not yield him an average wage. These are what are known as abnormal working places. A seam, in the course of working, may develop a number of abnormally good places, where the yield of clean coal is unusually large. In such cases the collier gets all the advantage; no demand is made by the management for a reduction in the cutting price; the workman gets the full value of his price-list for every extra cwt. of coal he may have produced as the result of the abnormally good condition of his stall. When, however, the working place becomes abnormal in a sense disadvantageous to the workman he claims extra payment, and in the South Wales coalfield the custom has always been to admit the claim and to meet it by "allowances."

Now, the friction in regard to abnormal working places is due to the fact that the management and the workmen do not always agree on the point as to whether a working place is or is not abnormal, and that when they have agreed on that point they still occasionally differ as to the fairness or otherwise of the allowance paid. At this point the disturbing human element enters into the problem; skill and experience, judgment and common sense, labour efficiency and labour inefficiency, honest effort and ca' cannyism, managerial capacity or incapacity, and good or bad trade conditions—all these forces are brought into play, and it is to the action of such a medley of forces that the abnormal places trouble is attributable. Colliery officials are continuously valuing work. Hardly a day passes in

which they are not called upon to apply their knowledge and experience to this task, and, as a collier may only occasionally come across difficulties, his judgment in the assessment of the value of work to be done is more liable to error than that of the official. It is not always, however, that the better capacity of the official is admitted. Though usually instructed by his employers to be fair and reasonable in his allowances he is sometimes suspected of being influenced by other considerations than that of giving a just measure of the value of the work done, and friction ensues.

The workman complains that he does not get a fair day's wage for his day's work, and the employer that he does not get a fair day's work for the wage he pays. It speaks well, however, for the reasonableness with which the matter as a whole is dealt with that it is only in a small minority of cases that difficulties arise. As a rule abnormal places give no serious trouble. The workman and the manager or his representative come to an agreement as to the allowance to be paid while the working place remains in an abnormal condition ; and there the matter ends. Collieries might be named where a dispute over abnormal places allowances has never been known ; and certainly there has been no strike of any importance on that sole issue in the whole history of the South Wales coalfield.

It is characteristic of the abnormal-places problem that in the South Wales coalfield it owes its importance, not to any widespread grievance affecting wages, but to a local County Court decision of Judge Bryn Roberts describing the allowances as gratuities and as not legally recoverable. The case was that of Walters v. The Ocean Coal Co., Ltd. The plaintiff claimed certain allowances at a different rate from that stated in the price-list for what he described as an abnormal working place and pleaded that according to the custom of the coalfield he was entitled to them. In his judgment Judge Bryn Roberts said :—

> " There is no obligation provided for in the contract to pay at a different rate for abnormal or disturbed ground to what there is to be paid in different ground. There being no obligation, it becomes a matter of pure gratuity, and I can well understand that having regard to the collieries and their wish to retain their workmen—they may know that if matters are gone into under the written contract that a man could not make fair wages, and they would lose their workmen—they might think it advisable—they might constantly, by giving gratuities in order to induce the workmen to continue to go on. But if it becomes a matter of legal compulsion, in my opinion, with the facts proved and admitted—there has been practically no dispute really as to the facts of what has been allowed—that matter has been decided practically by the managers without any indepen-

dent consent—in fact, that the position of matters is not a legal custom which can be imported into the contract. In my opinion what can be done is this—that the workmen, or persons representing them, should insist that there should be a clause for different payment for disturbed ground, and that that should appear in the price-list. I think it ought to. But in the absence of anything in the contract at all making it obligatory at all to pay for disturbed ground I cannot rule that they are entitled to claim a different rate unless they can show a custom which is fixed and defined and not such a custom as was proved in this case."

The first step taken to meet the situation created by this decision was the appointment of a sub-committee of the Conciliation Board. There was no difference between the parties as to the custom of allowances. The coalowners freely admitted the right of the workmen to allowances, and to allowances commensurate with the work done; but the sub-committee failed to come to an agreement. In the course of the negociations over the new Wages Agreement in 1910, Mr. W. Brace, the acting chairman, during those negociations, of the workmen's side, explained that failure in the following words:—"The Committee agreed upon the principle and terms were exchanged. The only point of difference between your side and our side was the amount that had to be paid. Could we have accepted the colliers' rate prevailing at the collieries there would have been a settlement of the question, but we then, as now, did not see our way clear."

The next step was a demand for the insertion in the Wages Agreement of 1910 of a clause dealing with the matter along the lines not of local but of general application. In this step the workmen's representatives, though disclaiming, through their acting chairman, Mr. W. Brace, M.P., that their demand was prompted by any dissatisfaction with the allowances made to men employed in abnormal places,* introduced the minimum wage principle by

*NOTE.—Extract from the Minutes of the proceedings of the Conciliation Board, February 9th, 1910:—"Mr. Brace (dealing with work in abnormal places):—The man who is not giving satisfaction is the exception and not the rule. We are trying to draft an agreement here for the mass of the people and for the mass of the employers. You have taken your stand as to abnormal places upon the exceptional man. Mr. Heppell (on behalf of the owners):—Exactly what you have done—you have taken your stand on the ground that there are exceptional cases where the colliery official does not give the man what he is entitled to; and because there are exceptional cases you want the whole position altered. Mr. Brace:—That is not so; *whatever ground we may have for complaining about the officials it is not upon that ground that we are seeking to have this clause, but it is upon this distinct action of the judge.*"

demanding a guaranteed abnormal base wage of 4/9 per day, which, in addition to the percentage of 50 per cent. which was in force at the time it was made, was equal to a wage of over 7/- a day. This was opposed by the coalowners on many grounds, and it will serve to show the difficult nature of the abnormal-places problem if some of the objections urged by the coalowners against the demand are re-stated. It has already been shown that the owners admit the claim of the workmen to allowances, and to such allowances as represent a fair day's wage for a fair day's work.

It is when the problem is taken beyond that point that the differences between the workmen and the owners become fundamental. The coalowner's take exception to the workmen's demand on several grounds. In the South Wales coalfield the commodity produced is clean large coal. It is upon that commodity that it has acquired its world-wide reputation. Throughout its career as a great coal-exporting district it has witnessed the greatest care on the part of the colliery owners to maintain that reputation by the means it was acquired. Two particular forms in which that care has been displayed in the mine itself have been the discouragement of the production of small coal and the direct encouragement of the production of large coal by the payment of a tonnage rate on large coal only. During the past few decades, the organised power of trade unionism in the coalfield has compelled a modification of some of the harsher of the old service contract conditions on this point. The Agreement of 1871, for instance, in addition to limiting the tonnage principle to "large marketable coal, hand-picked into trams," contained a graduated scale* of penalties for any "brass, bast, stone, ironstone, bad coal, shale, or rubbish" found in a collier's tram. In the later Agreements these scales of penalties do not appear; but to-day, as in 1871, the bargain between the employer in the steam coal area and the collier is to produce "clean large coal only," and now, as then, the tonnage rate paid is on "clean large coal only."

In the production of large coal a certain proportion of small coal may be caused by attrition as well as by negligent filling of the tram, but the contract of service makes no discrimination between the two cases, and the Agreement of 1910 specifically provides that the tonnage rate paid on large coal "includes all services in respect of the small coal necessarily produced in filling the large coal, in conveying it from the working places to the screen at the surface, and in the process of screening, that price being equal to the value of all the

*NOTE.—"In case any brass, bast, stone, iron stone, bad coal, shale or rubbish shall be found in any collier's tram to the amount of 20 pounds he shall forfeit and pay to the said owners a sum of ; and for every 30 pounds ; and for every 50 pounds ; and if the whole quantity of brass, &c., shall exceed 90 lbs. be shall forfeit and pay .

services involved in getting such large coal and small coal and being more than the value of the services rendered in respect of the large coal only."

There are, of course, other reasons than the commercial one for the cutting of the coal in large lumps. The most obvious is that in the steam coal measures this is the most natural method of working; but the commercial factor renders imperative what might otherwise be a matter of indifference, and if the need for producing "clean large coal only" was a commercial necessity in 1871 it is still more so to-day. None the less essential, too, in the view of the coalowners, is the maintenance as far as possible of the principle of remunerating labour employed in the cutting of coal on a tonnage basis. In a coal mine such supervision as is possible and is generally practised in surface employments is impracticable. The piece rate may not be a perfect method of wage remuneration; but while it automatically punishes the lazy and the indifferent workman it at the same time automatically rewards the capable and industrious workman. Both get the wages they have earned, but in the one case they are low and in the other high; and as the labour of the man who earns the higher wage yields the larger return of marketable commodity for the capital and managerial energy expended on the undertaking he is the better servant of the two. The bad and the indifferent workmen are a burden on every industry; but on none more than the mining industry. Thus it will be seen that the production of "clean large coal only" and the remuneration of the man who cuts coal on a tonnage basis are defended on commercial as well as on economic grounds; and one of the strongest reasons why the owners opposed the demand for a fixed minimum wage for men employed in abnormal places was the fact that such a demand in their opinion struck at the very foundations of the South Wales coal trade.

But their opposition went further. Convinced as they were and are that the guarantee of a fixed minimum wage to colliers employed in abnormal places is bad in principle they were equally as convinced that it would be bad in practice. They stated that their pretty general experience supported this conviction up to the hilt. The following are some examples of cases which they contended showed how minimum or day rates to colliers encourage low outputs:—

Cambrian Colleries, Limited.

Two Foot Nine Seam.
Coal Gotten.

With minimum wage clause in price list.	Without minimum wage clause in price list.
Days worked, 67.	Days worked, 58.
Coal produced, 65 tons. 3 cwt.	Coal produced, 97 tons. 8 cwt.
Cwts. per day, 18.7.	Cwts. per day, 33.5 (83 per cent. increase).

Glamorgan Coal Co., Limited.

Coronation Seam.
Coal Gotten.

With minimum wage clause in price list.	Without minimum wage clause in price list.
Days worked, 1,481.	Days worked, 987.
Coal produced, 2,639 tons 10 cwt.	Coal produced, 2,578 tons 18 cwt.
Cwts. per day, 35.64.	Cwts. per day, 52.73 (increase 47 per cent.)

Gwaun Cae-Gurwen Colliery.

Comparison of Coal filled by Colliers when working on "Daywork" and "Piecework."

Working Daywork.						Working Piecework.					
Fortnight ending 1911.	Coal Filled. T.	C.	Days worked. Men.		Boys.	Fortnight ending 1911.	Coal Filled. T.	C.	Days worked. Men.		Boys.
NEW PIT.											
Oct. 14	20	2½	22½	@4 7	—	Oct. 28	45	13¼	17½		4@2 6
14	15	4¼	21½	,,	—	28	33	11½	21		—
14	16	13¼	14½	,,	—	Sep. 30	25	15½	12½		—
14	34	11	19	,,	4½@2 1, 5 @1/9½	Oct. 28	65	13	23		9½@1/9½
14	27	15¾	16	,,	8½@3/1	28	54	4	22½		1 @ 3/1
14	45	0¼	38	,,	½@2 1	28	89	8	38		2 @ 2/3
	159	7	131½		18½		314	5¼	134½		16½
Average	1	1¼	150 days.			Average	2	1½	151 days.		
OLD PIT.											
1910.			Men.		Boys.	1911.			Men.		Boys.
Dec. 24	33	8¾	23@4/7		11½@3/5	Mar. 4	60	0¼	15		11@3 5, 1@2 1
1911.											
Jan. 7	22	5¾	16	,,	8½@2/9½	4	55	8½	24		12@2/1
7	21	12¼	15	,,	8 @2 6	4	43	0½	13		6@2,6, 5@2 1
	77	6¾	54		28		158	9¼	52		35
Average –		18¾	82 days.			Average	1	16¼	87 days.		

NOTE: These day rates are exclusive of the 50 % general wage rate.

During the negociations over the 1910 Wages Agreement it was stated that outputs had even increased by 100 per cent. after a price-list had been fixed. But apart from this form of ca'cannyism the coalowners complained that they had to contend with a steady diminution in the average output of the collier, and that this diminution was due very largely if not exclusively to the exercise of less effort on the part of the average workman. On this point the figures for South Wales are certainly remarkably suggestive. In 1887 the average output per person employed under ground was 350 tons per annum. In 1910 it was 268 tons—a decrease of 82 tons per annum, which is equal to a decrease per person of about 23 per cent.† The Eight Hours Act and labour disputes may have contributed to the greatly diminished production in 1910, and for that reason the 1910 figures do not offer a fair comparison. Taking the 1908 returns, the output was 292 tons per person employed underground—a decrease compared with 1887 of over 16½ per cent, and how this diminished production affected employment and cost of production on the wage side may be judged from the fact that while between 1887 and 1908 the output of the coalfield increased by 93 per cent. the increase in the number of persons employed was over 130 per cent. (If we take the returns for 1910 the position which they disclose is very much worse, for in that year the output of the coalfield compared with that of 1887 was 80 per cent. greater, while the increase in the number of persons employed was 145 per cent.) The following are the returns for a number of years since 1887 :—

Year.	All persons employed.	Total output.	Output per person employed underground.
1887	86,915	26,046,374	350
1891	116,624	29,992,810	299
1894	124,655	33,418,344	314
1899	132,682	39,870,097	356
1905	165,609	43,203,071	306
1908	201,752	50,221,278	292
1910*	213,252	48,699,982	268

It is often urged that the principal reason for this heavy decrease in the output per person employed is the increasing distances along

†NOTE.—In 1887, the output worked out at 29,969 tons for every 100 persons employed; in 1908, the output per every 100 persons employed was 24,887 tons; in other words, it required in 1908 over 120 workmen to produce the output yielded by 100 workmen in 1887.

*Eight Hours Act (which was in operation during the whole of the year), the strike at the Cambrian Combine, Powell Duffryn and other collieries, and the loss of trade due to these labour troubles, were responsible for the heavy decrease in 1910.

which the coal has to be carried underground owing to the deepening and the extensions of underground workings. To say the least of it that explanation is incomplete. There is no doubt that coal mining has become more difficult, more costly, and that in the poorer collieries altered physical and working conditions have been largely responsible for the reduction in the output per person employed. In those collieries the increase in the number of workmen employed in the handling of the coal after it has been cut at the face has increased in greater proportion than has the number of the colliers as the workings have been carried further underground, and this disproportionate increase in the number of non-productive hands has led to a diminished output per person and to increased cost of production. But what applies to the poorer and older collieries cannot be said to apply to the newer and the best-equipped of the larger colliery undertakings, or to the seams which are being continually opened out to replace those that have been exhausted.

During the past 15 or 20 years the progress made in South Wales in the application of mechanical power to mining work has been phenomenal. Steam and horse haulage underground has been largely replaced by electrical haulage; the economy of time and labour effected by the introduction of electrical and other drills and by the improvements in explosives has been considerable; while the changes that have taken place in the appliances for raising the coal to the surface, and for handling it after it has been brought to bank, and in the transport of the coal to its markets, have been greater than during any corresponding period in the history of the industry. So great, indeed, has been the effect of these changes that Mr. E. M. Hann,* the general manager of the Powell Duffryn Collieries, and one of the most eminent practical mining engineers in the country, has no hesitation in stating that they more than counter-balance any diminution in the productiveness of labour that might have been due to increased physical difficulties, and that the diminished output per individual is due to less personal effort.

A partial explanation of the diminished output per person is to be found in a study of the relation of output to wages. When wages have been high outputs have invariably been relatively low; and when wages have been low outputs have been relatively high. It

NOTE.—In his evidence before the Eight Hours Departmental Committee in 1907, Mr. E. M. Hann, the General Manager of the Powell Duffryn Collieries, submitted a statement showing that in the course of 25 years the output per collier or coal getter employed at the face in a certain seam of coal had fallen in one case from 46 cwts. per day to 25 ½ cwts. per day, and in another case from 58½ cwts. to 45½ cwts. Mr. Hann states:—"I have compared results under precisely the same set of conditions. Generally in 25 years conditions are liable to alter. I took these cases because the conditions are practically identical with what they were."

would appear as though every collier had his own standard of earnings. Among miners, as among other classes of workmen, there are men of thrift, and so determinedly have these men made hay while the sun shone that they have become property owners; but it seems clear that in number they are a minority, and that with the majority of workmen the high wage rate has been a pretext for the application of less effort. A table has just been given showing the outputs per person employed underground over a series of years. The following statement gives the average wage rate and the average outputs for the same years :—

Year.	Output per person.	Average percentage of Wages above 1879 standard
1887	350	2.91 per cent.
1891	299	55.83 ,,
1894	314	25.10 ,,
1899	356	23.05 ,,
1905	306	34.58 ,,
1908	292	60
1910*	268	49.68 ,,

*In 1910 the Eight Hours Act was in operation.

Another circumstance to be taken into account when considering the diminution in the output per person employed is that in the South Wales coalfield the demand for labour has been too great to permit the exercise by the employers of much power of selection from the supply of labour offering itself for employment. In the evidence which they gave before the Eight Hours Departmental Committee several of the managers called from South Wales stated that over a long period the demand had exceeded the supply, and that the employment of men with little or no previous practical mining experience had led to a reduced average efficiency. As a matter of course, all these different factors have had their effect on the cost of production. In his pamphlet on "The Industrial Struggle in the mid-Rhondda," Mr. D. A. Thomas gave a series of tables showing that at the Cambrian collieries the cost of labour per ton of "through" coal between 1887 and 1909 had increased by 104 per cent., and that the net selling price of that coal free on board had increased by 61 per cent., but that the profit per ton on the coal sold was 8 per cent. less in 1909 than it was in 1887. Dealing in that pamphlet with the cost of production at the large majority of the collieries in South Wales, Monmouthshire, Mr. Thomas added :— "I am not at liberty to give publicity to the general figures, but I hope my assurance may be accepted that the cost of labour per ton of large coal in 1908, the last year for which figures are available, when the average wage-rate averaged 60 per cent. above the 1879 standard, was about 2¼ times the cost in 1887, when the wage-rate was about 3 per cent. above the standard." Mr. E. M. Hann adds

the statement that the benefits of all the enormous sums spent during the past 25 years on engineering and other improvements with the object of increasing the efficiency of the colliery have been swallowed up by labour.

When it is remembered, further, that competition, domestic as well as foreign, in the coal trade was never so keen as it is to-day, and that owing to labour and political agitations, and to the unscrupulousness with which some miners' leaders have thrown over contracts and agreements and have advocated illegal and unconstitutional courses, the need for the maintenance of discipline in the mine was never more imperative—when all these things are taken into consideration it is easy to realise the difficulties which stand in the way of the concession of the workmen's abnormal-places demand.

In the South Wales coalfield all these considerations provoked an uncompromising resistance on the part of the coalowners to the form in which the demand for a minimum wage to workmen employed in abnormal places was submitted to them. The economic advantage which they held as employers gave the coalowners a power to remunerate labour in abnormal conditions in accordance with the merits of each case—that power they were determined not to barter away without such a security as would be consistent with their interests and responsibilities as colliery managers, as well as with their duties as employers of labour; and in regard to none of the proposals submitted to them on the subject were they satisfied that they were given such a security. It was possible, as the men argued, that this power might have been abused in individual cases; but to such arguments the owners replied that as a rule abnormal places gave little or no difficulty, that the occurrence of exceptional cases where a colliery official had not given a workman what he considered he was entitled to was not a sufficient reason for a radical change in the whole of the existing wage system, and that for the maintenance of discipline and for the just treatment of the bad and the indifferent workman it was morally necessary that the employer should retain a certain amount of power. They held that the concession of the workmen's demands would have rendered the employers powerless to deal with these evils.

The coalowners, moreover, pointed out that in the South Wales coalfield the concession of a guaranteed minimum wage for abnormal working places might lead to an enormous multiplication in the number of abnormal working places. With a minimum of from 7/- to 8/- a day assured, the workmen would be tempted to claim that a working place which varied in the slightest degree from their average conditions was an abnormal-place; and the coal owners feared that in this way the alleged panacea, instead of remedying, might aggravate the evil.

For all these reasons the coalowners, during the negociations in 1910, confined their proposals to the particular situation created by Judge Bryn Roberts' decision. Prior to that decision the collier went before the local County Court Judge with his abnormal places grievance. The late Judge Gwilym Williams—Judge Bryn Roberts' predecessor—dealt with it, and, guided as he was by the facts of each particular case in regard to allowances, his judgments on the whole gave general satisfaction. The coalowners offered to embody a clause in the new Agreement which they were advised by their legal advisers met the recommendation of Judge Bryn Roberts, and which also provided for negociation between the workman and his employer for an extra price-list allowance or sum at any moment a working place became abnormal, and that in the case of a failure to agree the complaining workman should have the right to discharge himself without any notice if the manager did not offer him a working place in a normal condition. The workmen's representatives, however, complained that the clause proposed by the coalowners did not fully meet the position created by Judge Bryn Roberts decision, and in their final forms the proposal of the workmen and the counter proposal of the employers were in the following terms :—

Workmen's Demand.

When colliers in any colliery meet with soft coal, rolls, faults, or other unusual conditions and give notice of the same to the management, the management and the colliers so affected shall endeavour to arrive at a settlement by which an allowance or extra sum shall be paid. But failing an agreement as to the amount to be paid the basis of payment for the collier working in the abnormal place shall be the average earned by him for the three months previous when his place was in a normal condition ; provided that if the management at any time become dissatisfied with the work done by the collier in any such working place the management shall, after complaint has been made to the collier, have the right to remove him to another place in the same colliery."

Owners' Counter-Offer.

" When colliers in any colliery meet with soft coal, faults, rolls, or other unusual conditions, and give notice of the same to the management, the management and colliers so affected shall endeavour to arrive at a settlement by which an allowance or extra sum shall be paid, but failing an agreement the management or the colliers so affected shall be at liberty to determine the contract without giving a month's notice if the manager does not offer the colliers a place in normal condition. Should, however, the work-

men go to such a normal place or leave owing to the conditions aforesaid, they shall be paid the value of the services already rendered owing to the unusual conditions of their working place. The management shall have the right without any interference on the part of the workmen or any of them to obtain other workers who shall work in the places where failure to agree has arisen either by piecework or any other manner that may be agreed upon. This clause shall apply to any boys or helpers that are engaged with the said colliers in the place or places where the failure to agree has arisen."

As the parties failed to come to terms, both proposals were withdrawn and the new agreement without an abnormal-places clause was sanctioned by the M.F.G.B., approved by an overwhelming majority in a ballot vote of the South Wales miners, and signed by all the workmen's representatives on the South Wales Conciliation Board. The agreed period for which that Agreement was to remain in force was five years. During that period it was clearly understood between the workmen's and the coalowners' representatives that the position in regard to abnormal places was to remain as it was: that is, in the position it was left by Judge Bryn Roberts' decision; and Mr. T. Richards, acting in his capacity as the Secretary of the South Wales Miners' Federation, handed Mr. Dalziel, the secretary of the Coalowners' Association, a letter in which the workmen's representatives agreed "that the price-lists waiting the signatures of the parties and future price-lists that may be agreed upon, shall be signed without the insertion of a clause dealing with abnormal places."

After the conclusion of the 1910 Agreement the abnormal place question became quiescent till the Cambrian Combine strike. There it was once again given vitality in the form of a demand that the Naval Colliery Company should agree that the wages of the workmen employed on the disputed seam should not go below 5/- per day plus percentages; and in the persistency with which the demand was urged by the Cambrian Combine strikers and by those local leaders who supported them began the movement which within twelve months was destined to convert a local into a national question.

The first active step taken in the matter by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain was at the annual conference of that organisation held in Edinburgh, in October, 1910. The resolution, which was unanimously adopted at that national conference on the motion of Mr. C. B. Stanton, the miners' agent of the Aberdare district, South Wales, instructed the miners' organisations in each of the districts affiliated to the national union to demand "a fair living wage to be paid to all colliers working in abnormal places, failing to get which a national conference be called to consider the

matter." In accordance with this instruction the workmen's representatives on the South Wales Conciliation Board applied, in January, 1911, for the appointment of a small committee to consider the question. The coalowners refused the application, but in some of the other colliery districts of the country, where the local conditions differed considerably from those in South Wales, negociations were opened between the workmen and their employers; and this was the position of affairs when a special national conference was held at Westminster Palace Hotel, London, on January 24th. At that conference the delegates from the South Wales coalfield applied for national action in support of the Cambrian Combine strikers. Some of the delegates asked that that support should take the form of a national strike on the abnormal places. The conference declined to agree to such an extreme course. It held the view that one was a local and the other a general question, and that the two could not be mixed without prejudice to both. The conference, accordingly, met the South Wales demand with a grant of £3,000 a week and the larger issue with the adoption of a resolution instructing all districts in the Federation "to press for the average or minimum rate of wages, whichever is in operation, to apply to all workmen engaged in working in abnormal places or under abnormal conditions; and should any district fail at the end of three months from this date to obtain this the members of the Federation be recommended to consider the advisability of taking national action to enforce this; and that a conference be called at the expiration of this term to receive reports upon this resolution, and then decide what action shall be taken." Giving effect to this resolution the workmen's representatives on the South Wales Coal Trade Conciliation Board again raised the question at a meeting of that Board held on March 24th, and stated "they had to report to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain in conjunction with the representatives from other districts as to what steps the owners in the different districts were prepared to take with a view to meeting the men on this matter, and trying to obtain some solution of it, as the workmen thought it would be much to the advantage of the owners as well as to the workmen to obtain a settlement." Mr. Fred. L. Davis, chairman of the owners' representatives on the Board, in reply, pointed out that when the new Conciliation Board Agreement was signed in 1910 the workmen's representatives withdrew their proposal in regard to abnormal places; and, further, that Mr. T. Richards, the workmen's secretary, had sent a letter to Mr. Dalziel, the owners' secretary, on the 30th March, 1910, stating "that the price-lists at present awaiting the signature of the parties, and future price-lists that may be agreed upon shall be signed without the insertion of a clause dealing with abnormal places." Mr. Davis said that in view of this definite undertaking the owners could not agree to the

matter being re-opened during the present Agreement, and that the workmen's representatives were now really endeavouring to obtain a revision of the Agreement which was entered into only a year ago.

At another special conference of the M.F.G.B., held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on April 26th, the miners' national organisation once again refused to allow the Cambrian dispute to be made a cause for national action on the abnormal places, and finding that the reports of the districts on that question were still incomplete they deferred its consideration. At a third special national conference, held on June 13th, the M.F.G.B. not only again refused to comply with the Welsh demand, but washed its hands of the Cambrian dispute, and plainly told the South Wales Federation that it had to accept the settlement terms of May 15th. On July 29th the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, at a fourth special conference, dealt exclusively with the abnormal-places question, and on that occasion committed itself to an attempt to settle the problem on national lines. The terms of the resolution were as follows :—

> "That the officials of the Federation be instructed to arrange with the coalowners of the United Kingdom for a joint meeting to consider the question of paying the district minimum rate of wages for working abnormal places; that, failing to get satisfaction on this question, a conference be called to decide upon a ballot of the members of the Federation to ascertain if they are in favour of ceasing work until the district minimum wage is obtained."

Acting on this resolution, Mr. T. Ashton, the secretary of the M.F.G.B., wrote on August 1st to Sir T. R. Ellis, the secretary of the Mining Association of Great Britain, asking for a joint meeting of the representatives of the Mining Association and of the M.F.G.B. "to consider the question of a rate of payment for working in abnormal places and also to consider the low wages paid to day wage men." On August 3rd, Sir T. R. Ellis replied informing Mr. Ashton that the Mining Association of Great Britain did not deal with such questions, and that if such a meeting took place it must be with representative coalowners appointed by the different districts. Sir Thomas added that he was sending a copy of Mr. Ashton's letter to the local secretary in each district asking if the local association was prepared to nominate representatives to attend such a meeting.

On September 19th, at Westminster Palace Hotel, a representative meeting of coalowners was held under the chairmanship of Sir Lindsay Wood to consider the M.F.G.B. application. At that gathering the representatives from the different local associations stated their respective positions. The majority of the speakers expressed their readiness to meet the workmen's representatives, but their speeches revealed the existence of many practicable

difficulties in the way of the granting of the workmen's demand. It was explained that in Northumberland and Durham the colliers were paid compensation for abnormal places, that there was no datal wage to govern such payment, and that in Northumberland there was practically no abnormal-places problem. In Scotland the owners had no contract with their men. If a workman was not satisfied with his place he went to another working place, and the owners had come to the conclusion that there was no necessity to change the present system. In Lancashire the owners and the workmen's representatives had had several meetings and in the terms proposed was a clause providing that in an abnormal place payment was to be made to a workman to make up his day wage (previously the amount paid had been entirely in the discretion of the manager). In regard to the Lancashire scheme it was explained that the proposed machinery provided that in cases of dispute the wage to be paid in an abnormal place should first be discussed between the workman and the manager, that in the event of the workman and the manager failing to agree the workman's agent should meet the manager, and that in the case of a failure between those two men the matter should be referred to two coal-owners not interested and two representatives of the miners. Any settlement thus arrived at would be retrospective on the condition that there had been no stoppage in the meantime. The workmen's representatives had suggested that a day wage of 7/- should be inserted in price-lists which provided no fixed rates for abnormal places; to that proposal the owners' representatives had demurred. There were other differences, but so far were they considered from being insurmountable that an agreement would probably have been arrived at but for the fact that the miners had made the matter a national one. It was stated that in Yorkshire the workmen and the colliery owners had come to an agreement; but that in South Wales the owners were not only opposed to the granting of the workmen's demand, but they questioned the advisability of meeting the workmen's representatives in a national conference. They adopted this *non possumus* attitude on the ground that when in March, 1910, a new Wages Agreement was concluded the workmen's representatives had withdrawn a demand for fixed payment for abnormal-places, and that the differences in the working conditions in different districts were so great as to render an uniform rate impracticable. It was pointed out, moreover, that, in the South Wales coalfield there was no such thing as a district wage. The men were paid on large coal; difficult and abnormal places were more numerons than they were in the other coalfields; and if there were a fixed rate for abnormal-places the workman might draw the wage and do little or no work. The custom of the coalfield was that in abnormal places the workman was given an allowance which

secured him a fair day's wage for the work done. The manager knew the workman and rewarded him according to his work.

In the Midlands it was ascertained that the owners were opposed to the demand for a minimum wage, but they were prepared to consider the question of the rate to be paid for abnormal working places—as a matter of fact they had practically come to an understanding on the basis of a scheme which was a modification of that proposed in Lancashire. In view of these diversities of local conditions and of the differences in local wage practices it was felt that the only possible line of solution lay in the direction of a separate treatment of each district; and at the close of the meeting a letter was addressed to Mr. Ashton accepting the proposal for a joint conference, and fixing its date for September 29th.

At this conference the cases urged by the chief spokesman of the workmen and the coalowners respectively were briefly as follows:—

Workmen's Case.

"In a nutshell they asked that when a man had done a day's work he should be paid for it. Nearly all coal in this country was got by contract. It was a credit to both workmen and managers that that system had worked fairly satisfactorily; but in working under contract rates the men sometimes came across unforeseen difficulties which injured their earning capacity. These difficulties injured also the earning capacity of the Company; but the incidence was unequal, for while the workman had to depend on what his working place yielded him the employers might be compensated by better working places in other parts of the mine. Nothing could be more disappointing to an honest well-intentioned workman than to find on a Saturday that the wages which he drew were insufficient to keep him going or to pay his helper. There should be a definite and fixed understanding that whatever was the agreed and understood wage at that pit should be paid to the workman during such working difficulties. Workmen generally did not want to abolish the contract or piece-rate system; in the demand they were now making they were not interfering with that system; but they did ask that a man should be given a solid permanent guarantee that when his contract did not yield him a fair wage he should be paid it otherwise, and that he should not be left in the awkward position, when he had discharged his obligations to his helper, of finding that there was little money left for himself. If peace was to be maintained in the coal trade this difficulty had to be met, and met without delay."

Coalowners' Reply.

"The question was not one which could be settled uniformly for every district and for all the varied conditions and circumstances in the different districts. The coalowners were and had been willing for some time to give consideration to the cases where a workman, owing to the existence of conditions over which he had no control was unable to earn the wage he ought to earn in a normal place. The custom hitherto had been to meet such cases by the payment of consideration wages, and, in the payment of this compensation, to take into consideration not only the character of the abnormal place but also the quality, i.e., the labour efficiency, of the workman employed there. It would not be right that the wages of a man who in a normal place would be earning on an average from 7 - to 8 - a day should, when that man's working place became abnormal, be brought down to the ordinary average wage of the colliery in which he was working. Neither was it right that a man who was weakly, or was a bad or indifferent collier, should, when employed in an abnormal place, have his wages brought up to the higher average. In the payment for work done in abnormal places the relative efficiency of the workman as well as the character of the working place should be taken into account. Moreover, some working places were only slightly while others were totally abnormal. In view of these facts it was extremely difficult if not impossible to fix any particular amount of wage a man should earn throughout the whole country; the only practicable method of dealing with the matter was by local action which took into account not only the conditions of each separate and possibly of every colliery, but also the varying degrees in the efficiency of the workman. On these lines the problem was already in course of settlement in several districts; and if the uniform principle were accepted those settlements would be upset."

The two sides failed to come to an agreement and the official report of the day's proceedings gave the following terms of the coalowners' proposal and the workmen's counter-proposal:—

"The coalowners suggested the following proposals:—

"(1) The owners recognise the right of workmen who are engaged in places which are abnormal to receive wages commensurate with the work performed.

"(2) The customs and circumstances of the different districts vary so much that it is, in the opinion of the coalowners, impossible to deal with the question collectively as applied

to the whole kingdom, and, therefore, the methods of dealing with it can only be satisfactorily settled locally in the different districts.

"(3) This collective meeting of coalowners therefore recommends the coalowners in the various districts of the kingdom to meet the representatives of the men in their respective districts when requested to do so.

"(4) It must be understood in coming to the foregoing conclusion the meeting must not be assumed to have done anything in abrogation of existing agreements.

"The miners' representatives also submitted the following counter-proposals :—

"That this conference of coalowners and miners' representatives recognise the right of a miner working at the coal face at the fixed tonnage rate to receive full wages if employed in an abnormal place, the rate to be the average rate of wages previously earned by the workman in normal conditions, which shall not be less than the recognised minimum or average rate paid in each district.

"Further, machinery should be set up in the various districts for the purpose of deciding on the question as to whether the place in dispute is abnormal. Pending the settlement of the dispute as to whether the place is abnormal or not the men to be paid the district rate."

After the abortive joint conference of September 29th, events moved rapidly, and within a fortnight the abnormal-places became absorbed in the larger demand for a minimum wage for all colliery workmen. In several of the mining districts the local miners' organisations had already committed themselves to an agitation for a minimum day wage ; and it had been made abundantly clear that in limiting, as they did at the September joint meeting with the coalowners, the application to abnormal working places exclusively of the principle of a minimum day wage, the older officials of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain were not acting in sympathy with the extreme Socialist members of the Federation. Prior to that conference the South Wales Miners' Federation had passed a resolution in favour of national action for 8/- a day for colliers organised in the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, and for 5/- a day for other unskilled surface workmen ; the Durham miners had pledged themselves to support a demand for a coalhewer's individual minimum wage of 7/- a day, and for an individual minimum day wage to other classes in proportion ; the North Wales Miners' Association had committed itself to the advocacy of a price-list which would give colliers a minimum day wage of 7/- a day, byemen, loaders and fillers 6/- a day, surface men 5/- a day, and a graduated scale for boys beginning at 2/- a day ;

and the Lancashire miners had asked for a minimum wage of 7 - a day for all coal-getters, as well as the supply of lights, explosives and tools free of cost. The speeches made by local leaders and the resolutions passed by branches of the districts affiliated to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain had made it no less clear that among the miners of the country there were a large number who disagreed with the older leaders also on the question of the maintenance of the tonnage or piece-rate basis, and who were prepared to support a national movement for its abolition and for the substitution of a general day rate system of wage payment. These local decisions in themselves showed how far the rank and file of the national Federation were in advance of the national Executive Council. In itself that was not a new phenomenon. Almost from the very beginning of its history the difficulty with the leading officials has not been to encourage, but to guide and restrain the reforming ambitions of the members of the Federation. On the whole they have performed that arduous task with much success ; but in the crisis of the autumn of 1911 they were confronted with a situation more perilous than any they had been called upon to deal with since the Miners' Federation of Great Britain had become thoroughly representative of the organised miners of the country. At the annual conference of that organisation, held at Southport in the first week of October, they did not give way entirely to the demands of the extremists ; their moderate counsels were not without their effect on the discussions ; but the forces arrayed against them were too formidable to be browbeaten, and, as the older members of the South Wales Executive did under very similar circumstances in the early stages of the Cambrian Combine strike, they temporised. It is quite true that on the wage question they succeeded in their efforts to prevent the conference from committing itself to an immediate strike in favour of an uniform minimum wage for all mine workers, and to secure further opportunities for discussion and conciliation ; but the price which they paid for these concessions from the Socialists was an assent on their part to the absorption of the abnormal places in the bigger demand for a district minimum wage for all men and boys working in mines and to a limitation of the period allowed for further negociation. The actual terms of the resolutions adopted were as follows :—

(1) "That the Federation take immediate steps to secure the individual district minimum wage for all men and boys working in mines in the area of the Federation without any reference to the working places being abnormal. In the event of the employers refusing to agree to this, then the twenty-first rule to be put into operation to demand the same, and that a conference be called for November 14th for the purpose of taking action under Rule 21.

(2) "That in order to put the preceding resolution into operation, the districts are hereby instructed to meet their employers on the question contained therein as early as possible, and that all delegates from the various counties and districts and federations come prepared to report on this to the special conference to be held on the 14th November."

The conference also passed resolutions advocating fortnightly instead of monthly notices "so that in case of a decision to enter on a general strike work would cease simultaneously throughout the federated area," recommending the Executive to take immediate steps with a view to the establishment of a "uniform working period over the whole British coalfield of five days a week" (this resolution was opposed by the South Wales delegates), urging a refusal on the part of the districts to enter into any new agreement "that will carry them beyond the time when the one expires having the longest period to run," and altering so fundamentally the Federation strike rule as to make it applicable for aggressive as well as for defensive action on the wage question. This alteration cleared the decks for the contemplated general strike, and as it marked the close of one chapter and the beginning of a new one in the history of the Federation it will be interesting to quote the new and the old rule.

Old Strike Rule.	New Strike Rule.
"Rule 21.—That whenever any Federation or district is attacked on the general wage question all members connected with the Society shall tender a notice to terminate contracts, if approved of by a conference called to consider the advisability of such joint action being taken."	"That whenever any Federation or district is attacked on the wages question or the conditions of labour, or, with the approval of the conference specially called for that purpose, has tendered notice to improve the conditions of labour or to obtain an advance in wages, a conference shall be called to consider the advisability of joint action being taken."

It will be the task of the future historian to tell the story of the practical results of these great changes in the policy and in the constitution of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. Here it will be sufficient to indicate a few of the considerations why the achievement of the end the workmen have in view will prove exceedingly difficult, if not in some colliery districts impossible. In the treatment of this question of a minimum wage it is essential to remember that most of the coalfields in the country are at present in the actual possession of a minimum wage. The underlying principle of the wage system in the coal trade is that the

actual earnings of the miner should bear a direct and intimate relation to the fluctuations in prices and to general trade conditions; but it is modified by conditions which prevent wages falling below or raising above a certain level. The wage arrangements founded upon that principle take the cutting prices and the day wage rates in a certain year as a working basis. The prices and the day rates in that selected year are called the standard prices or rates. In the South Wales, Durham, Northumberland, and Somerset coalfields the standard taken is that of 1879, and in the Midland districts, South Staffordshire, Bristol, Forest of Dean, and Scotland the standard year in 1888. In addition to these standard rates the miners are guaranteed under the Wages Agreements of the several districts certain minimum percentages. In the South Wales coalfield the minimum is 35 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879; in the Federated districts it is 37½ per cent. above the standard rates of 1888; in Northumberland and Durham there is no fixed minimum A system is in vogue by which base wages are levelled according to what are known as "county averages," but the Northumberland miners are now* agitating for a definite minimum of 30 per cent. on the standard rates of 1879. In Scotland the minimum rate is 50 per cent. above 1888. The standard years are arbitrarily chosen, and in themselves they do not possess any particular significance; but the extra wage payment guaranteed in the form of the minimum percentage is, together with the earnings of the miner on his standard, intended to meet the minimum wage requirements of efficient labour. Let the case of a South Wales miner be taken in order to illustrate how this system works in practice. Assuming that a collier earns, say, £1 10s. a week on his price-list, then the actual minimum wage which he will draw is £2 0s. 6d.; if he only earns £1 a week on his price-list then the wage which he will draw will be 27/-. Whatever may be his earnings on his standard rates he gets 35 per cent. added to them. But it is only on very rare occasions that the percentages reach the minimum. In the South Wales coalfield the annual average percentage has been above the minimum in every year since the minimum principle was established in 1903. It has been as low as 33.12 (in 1906, when the Agreement embodied a 30 per cent. minimum), and as high as 60 per cent. (in 1908), while for the eight years 1903-1910 it averaged 46.19 per cent. above the standard rates of 1870. Increased cost of working has contributed largely to the rise in the average selling price which has secured the workmen this relatively high average wage rate.

Against this system, however, the miners complain that under the conditions of a trade depression when, in sympathy with a decline in the average selling prices of coal, the percentages come tumbling down, or of abnormal working places where physical conditions render it impossible for the collier to produce his average

*November, 1911.

quantity of coal, earnings not only vary a great deal over long periods but that they have no fixed bedrock bottom. They do not eagerly wish to change that part of the system which secures them a share in the increased prices in periods of prosperity ; they desire that part of the system to remain in operation ; but the course to which they have now committed themselves aims at the establishment of a new system which, by giving the collier a day wage equal to the average district piece-rate wage, will protect him against the exigencies of trade depressions or of abnormal working places. For the reasons, however, already stated, it is contended that the granting of such a demand, if not fatal to the effectiveness of the tonnage system, would to a large number of workmen make that system absolutely worthless as an incentive to assiduous labour in coal-cutting. The objections urged against the concession of a minimum wage to men employed in abnormal places apply, it is stated, with tenfold force against the granting of a minimum of 7/- or 8/- to all colliers regardless of the state of the market or the efficiency or inefficiency of the collier. In the South Wales coalfield it would upset all local wage traditions and customs applicable to the work of colliers: it would in a large number of cases render price-lists absolutely worthless ; and would tend to degrade the average efficiency of labour to that of the worst workman. On the cost of production the effect of such a revolution would at least be proportionate to the reduced value per unit of the labour employed ; it might easily prove more than proportionate ; and the experience of the South Wales coal export trade during the past three or four years shows only too clearly how increased cost of production and the consequent enhanced selling prices can not only check expansion but lead to a permanent decline in trade.

In his great work on the coal question Jevons emphasised no point more strongly than the fact that the check to the growth of British industry would be caused not so much by the exhaustion of our coal measures as by the rise in the price of fuel. During the four years 1904-1907, when the selling prices of large Welsh coal averaged about 13/- f.o.b., the output of the South Wales coalfield increased by 14 per cent. ; during 1908-10, when the selling price of large coal averaged 14/8 per ton f.o.b., the output declined 2½ per cent. It is true that these are short period averages, but they prove the tendency which Jevons discussed, and against the grave consequences of which to national trade and industry he warned the country 50 years ago ; and it is because they believe that it will make coal production less expansive, colliery working less remunerative, the maintenance of discipline in the mine more difficult, and the causes and occasions for friction between employer and employed more numerous, that the coalowners, and particularly those of South Wales, are determined to oppose the demand for an unconditional and undiscriminating minimum district wage.

NOTE ON THE MINIMUM WAGE NEGOCIATIONS.

After the Southport conference the affiliated branches of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain formulated their minimum wage demands, and presented them to the representatives of the colliery owners on the local Conciliation Board. In South Wales the colliery owners rejected the workmen's demands on the ground that they violated specific provisions in the Wages Agreement of 1910; the Scottish coalowners opposed them on the ground that they violated the Board of Trade Agreement of 1909; in Northumberland the employers, while prepared to consider an application for a county minimum wage of a much lower percentage than 30 per cent. above the standard rates of 1879, informed the workmen's representatives that they could not agree to their proposal for the establishment of an individual minimum wage for everyone working in the mines irrespective of ability or disposition to earn such wage; the South Derbyshire owners met the workmen's demands with the reply that they considered the concession of those demands impracticable; in Cumberland, the employers suggested that if the demand for a minimum wage of 7/- for hewers were withdrawn they would be ready to consider the question of the payment of hewers working in deficient places; in the Lancashire and Cheshire district the employers refused the minimum wage proposal on the ground that it involved a violation of the local Conciliation Board Agreement; and in the Radstock district the reply of the owners was in the following terms: In view of the fact that the present getting rates are based upon average conditions and the efficiency of the workmen, the owners cannot agree to the payment of a minimum to all classes. In nearly every colliery district, however, the workmen were informed that the employers were prepared to consider the abnormal places question, and in some negociations on this point as well as on the question of levelling-up the wages of boys and the lower-paid day wagemen were carried a long way towards a settlement. This was the situation when, on November 10th, 1911, the question of a minimum wage for hewers working under contract or tonnage was brought before the Conciliation Board for the federated districts of England and North Wales. The coalfields under the general wage-rate control of that Board include Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, the Midlands, Somerset and North Wales—i.e., all the English coalfields except Northumberland and Durham—and in all of them the coal is worked mainly on the through-and-through system. At this meeting the workmen's demand was discussed on its merits and apart from the question of principle. The representatives of the employers and of the workmen failed to agree on a definite minimum rate for recommendation to the workmen and the colliery owners in the separate districts, but the margin between the rate applied for by the workmen's representatives and that offered by the representatives of the employers was very slight, and the reply of the owners as given in the official report of the day's proceedings was in the following terms: "The amended proposal for a minimum wage for coal-getters has had our careful consideration. Whilst we could recommend the adoption of the principle of a minimum wage the matter is beyond our power to decide to-day. We propose to take it to our districts and suggest an adjournment to the 6th of December for that purpose. In the meantime the negociations in regard to abnormal places and boys' and datallers' wages shall continue in the various districts." At the special conference of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, held in London on November 14th and November 15th, this arrangement for a further meeting of the English Conciliation Board and the prospects which it opened out of a peaceful settlement prevented extreme action being taken, and the resolutions adopted at that special national conference were in the following terms:—

(1) "That this conference, having heard the reports from districts on the minimum wage question, is glad to learn that those districts and counties associated with the English Conciliation Board have obtained from the Committee of the Employers' side on the Board the principle of a minimum wage for all men and boys working underground. We are, therefore, of the opinion that this conference should stand adjourned to a future date so that further efforts may be made to bring about a satisfactory settlement.

(2) "That this conference, having heard reports from all the districts in reference to the demand for an individual district minimum wage, is of the opinion that the best course to pursue at the present juncture with the view of obtaining that object with the least delay is to negociate nationally, and therefore we instruct the Executive Committee of the Federation to formulate the claims for each district, and, in order to give effect to this resolution, the Executive Committee with additional representatives meet the colliery owners of Great Britain at the earliest possible date and report immediately thereafter to a National Conference; but this resolution shall not prevent or interfere in any way with the negociations being now carried on in the various districts of the Federation.

(3) "This conference now stands adjourned to December 20th to receive the final reports."

The first of these resolutions was moved in the form of an amendment to a motion advocating an immediate coalfield ballot on the question of a national strike, and was carried by a majority of 128,000, the voting being as follows:—For a ballot, 238,000; for the amendment 366,000. South Wales, Northumberland and Lancashire were the three chief districts which supported and voted for the ballot motion. The English Federated districts, as well as Durham and Scotland, voted for the amendment.

APPENDIX A.

OPERATION OF THE COMPENSATION (1906) ACT IN SOUTH WALES COALFIELD.

The following comparative statistics showing the increase in the number of compensation cases before and after the Compensation Act of 1906, are taken from the official papers of the Monmouthshire and South Wales Employers' Mutual Indemnity Society, Ltd., and from the report of Mr. Henry Lewis, the Chairman, on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Acts of 1897 and 1906. Under the Act of 1897 the injured workmen received no compensation for the first fortnight; but the Act of 1906 provides that if the injury is such as to disable the man for more than a week and less than a fortnight he is entitled to compensation for any part of or for the whole of the second week. If the man is disabled for more than a fortnight he is paid from the first day of injury.

Statement showing cost of compensation and of the administration of the Act per 1,000 men employed at collieries and attached works and includes the actual expenditure as well as the amount of compensation to be paid in permanent cases in future years estimated on the basis laid down by the Act of 1906:—

		Cost per 1,000 men employed.
		£
Year ending June 30th,	1899...	656
,,	1900...	847
,,	1901...	916½
,,	1902...	985
,,	1903...	1,077
,,	1904...	1,121½
,,	1905...	1,282
,,	1906...	1,412
,,	1907...	1,278
Six months ending Dec.	1907...	912
Year ending Dec.	1908...	1,875
	1909...	1,883

Reporting to the Finance Committee on these returns in April, 1909, Mr. Lewis wrote:—" Your Committee are of opinion that the cost for the year 1902—£985 per 1,000 men employed—may fairly be taken to represent the cost of compensation without malingering. The Act of 1897 had then been in operation for 4 years, by which time our workmen must have been fully aware of their legal rights in the matter of compensation." Dealing with accidents resulting in fractures per 1,000 men employed—accidents which, he states,

may reasonably be classed as *bona fide* accidents—Mr. Lewis gives a table showing that since 1901 they have declined from 5·86 to 4·63 in 1910. These figures, which apply to over 120,000 workmen, dispose completely of the assertion that mining accidents have been on the increase since the Eight Hours Act came into force. As a matter of fact the rate per 1,000 was less in 1910—when the Eight Hours Act was in full operation—than in any year since 1901, the returns for each year being as follows: 1901, 5·86 per 1,000 men employed; 1902, 4·88; 1903, 5·01; 1904, 5·04; 1905, 5·24; 1906, 5·84; 1907, 5·35; 1908, 5·46; 1909, 4·95; 1910, 4·63.

The greater cost of compensation in the last few years has been due to the rapidly increasing burden of disablements of a fortnight and over, and Mr. Lewis gives a table in which it is shown that since 1900 these cases have increased from 40·8 to 137·84 per 1,000. Between 1900 and 1906 the percentages averaged 50·2 per 1,000 per annum; they have since reached 144 per 1,000 men employed. The following are the official figures:—

	Per 1,000 men employed.
1900-1906 average per annum	50·2
1907	69·74
1907 six months ending Dec. (under new Act)	69·26
1908	145·25
1909	144·00
1910	137·84

The Eight Hours Act came into force in the South Wales coalfield on July 1st, 1909. It reduced working hours on an average by about 10 per cent., and, for this reason, is responsible for the check in the increase in 1910. Another table prepared by Mr. Lewis shows that between 1900 and 1910 the number of disablements of over 12 months duration per 50,000 men employed increased from 45·1 (in 1900) to 177·8 (in 1910).

Dealing with these figures Mr. Lewis writes: "The small increase in 1906 and the decided decrease in 1907 are due we believe to the advancing and high wage rate of those years. On the other hand, notwithstanding the high wage rate paid in the half-year ending December 31st, 1907, the enormous growth in this class of case is due, we much fear, to the larger number of claims brought on by the amendments of the 14 days' clause of the Act of 1897. Serious as the working of the amended Act proves to be, members should be prepared to recognise that its demoralising effects must continue to add to the cost of compensation for very many years to come."

The following comparative statement gives the duration of cases of injury under the Compensation Acts of 1897 and 1906 per 1,000 men employed exclusively at collieries. It will be noted what an alarming alteration in the period of disablement has been effected by the amendment of the clause dealing with cases of slight injury:—

	Old Act. Six Months ending June, 1907.	New Act.* Six Months ending Dec., 1910.
Cases of Injured Workmen disabled for more than a week and less than a fortnight	18·89	5.63
For a fortnight and less than three weeks	4·45	26·29
For more than three weeks and less than four weeks	6·88	13·69
For four weeks and over	23·75	29·44

The following table gives the number of fatalities in the South Wales coalfield since 1892 :—

Year.	No. of Men Employed.	All Cases of Death in ordinary Accidents.	No. of Cases of Death alleged to be due to Accidents.	No. of Cases. exclusive of alleged Deaths due to Accidents.	Deaths per 1,000 Men Employed.
1892	117,713	220	2	218	1·852
1893	117,989	194	3	191	1·620
1894	124,655	190	8	182	1·460
1895	126,199	223	7	216	1·711
1896	125,205	222	10	212	1·693
1897	126,802	208	2	206	1·624
1898	128,813	156	3	153	1·188
1899	132,682	198	2	196	1·478
1900	147,652	234	8	226	1·531
1901	150,412	237	5	232	1·542
1902	154,571	212	13	199	1·288
1903	159,161	253	14	239	1·502
1904	163,034	257	13	244	1·497
1905	165,609	274	21	253	1·527
1906	174,660	267	11	256	1·466
*1907	190,263	295	21	274	1·441
1908	201,752	270	20	250	1·239
1909	204,984	306	40	266	1·298

NOTE. In the figures given in column 3 of deaths alleged to be due to accidents, and particularly in the figures for the later years, are cases where the immediate causes of death have been certified as cancer, peritonitis, heart disease, diabetes, pneumonia, tetanus, epileptic fits, paralysis, typhoid fever, etc. In the reports of H.M. Inspectors of Mines, many of such cases have been referred to as cases which would not have come under their purview but for the monetary benefits accruing to relatives under the Workmen's Compensation Act, and which did not come under their notice prior to that Act. It will thus be seen that the apparent increase is due to the inclusion of cases which do not clearly appear to have arisen from any accident ; if such cases are excluded (as they are from the last column) the figures show a decline in the fatal accident rate per 1,000 men employed.

*Amended (1906) Compensation Act came into force on July 1st, 1907.

APPENDIX B.

Duration of Sectional Strikes.

Statement showing Strikes at Associated Collieries between September, 1910, and October, 1911.

Colliery.	Dispute.	Duration.	Men employed.	How Settled.
Ely Colliery (Naval Co.) ...	Price-list	Sept. 1st, 1910, to Sept. 1st, 1911	977	Conciliation Board terms accepted.
Pandy & Nantgwyn Colliery	Strike in sympathy with Ely workmen	Sept. 5th, 1910, to Sept. 1st, 1911	1,400	Resumption of work on old conditions.
Cambrian Colliery... ...	Ditto	Nov. 1st, 1910, to Sept. 1st, 1911	4,112	Ditto.
Glamorgan Colliery ...	Ditto	Nov. 1st, 1910, to Sept. 1st, 1911	3,634	Ditto.
Britannic Merthyr... ...	Ditto	Nov. 1st, 1910, to Sept. 1st, 1911	790	Ditto.
D. Davis & Sons, Ferndale Collieries	Enginemen and stokers demand for improved conditions	October 1st, 1910, to October 10th, 1910	6,900	Work resumed on old conditions.

Maindy and Ton Level ...	Non-unionism	October 1st to October 14th, 1910	50	Non-unionists join Federation.
Gelli Colliery (Cory Bros.)...	Price-list	Oct, 1st, 1910, unsettled on Nov. 1st, 1911	800	
Mardy (Lockets Merthyr)...	Non-unionism	October 1st 1910 to October 11th, 1911	2,500	Non-unionists join Federation.
Cilely (Lockets Merthyr ...	Non-unionism and price-list	October 1st, 1910, to Jan. 19th, 1911	850	Dispute referred to two representatives
Powell-Duffryn Aberdare Valley Collieries	Supply of firewood and other grievances	October 20th to Jan. 2nd, 1911	5,500	Conciliation Board terms accepted.
Cwmaman Colliery ...	Strike in sympathy with "P.D." workmen	Nov. 5th, 1910, to Dec. 19th, 1910	1,900	Ditto.
Windber	Ditto	Ditto	125	Ditto.
Bwllfa Colliery (Bwllfa and Merthyr Dare Co.)	Ditto	Ditto	2,500	Ditto.
North's Maesteg Collieries	Trafficmen's wages	Nov. 1st to Nov. 7th, 1910	4,200	Settlement by Company & workmen.
Llandebie Colliery... ...	Payment for wood posts	Nov. 1st, 1910, unsettled on Nov. 1st, 1911	102	
Trimsaran Colliery ...	Price-list	Dec. 1st, 1910, unsettled on Nov. 1st, 1911	235	
Aber and Penllwyngwent (Cory Bros.)	Non-unionism and price-list	January 1st, 1911, to Aug. 12th, 1911	560	Dispute referred to four representatives.

In addition to the above there were stoppages also at many non-associated collieries, the most notable of which was a strike over a price-list and weekly pays at the Rose Heyworth and Cwmtillery collieries of the Lancaster Steam Coal Company. It extended from September 19th, 1910, to November 18th, 1910. It ended in a compromise. They also included stoppages at the Llwynhelig and Dyllas drifts and Abernant Colliery, in sympathy with the Powell Duffryn workmen, and extending over practically the whole period of the Aberdare Valley strike ; as well as strikes at the Cwmllynfell, Tareni, Glyn, Coytrahen Park, Ynisfaio, Bwllfa Du, Caeduke, Aberpergwm, Ystradowen, Pwllbach, Cwmteg, Rock and other small collieries. There were minor riots at Cwmllynfell in the beginning of November, 1910, and at Tareni in July, 1911.

APPENDIX C.

Magisterial Indictment of the Strikers.

In passing sentence on persons convicted, on October 4th, 1911, for intimidation at Trealaw on, July 26th, Mr. Lleufer Thomas (the Stipendiary Magistrate for the Pontypridd district), made the following severe comments on the conduct of the mid-Rhondda strike :—

> " I want to say, clearly and emphatically, as a believer in trades unionism, that the state of things which has prevailed in mid-Rhondda, the violence which has been resorted to under the pretence of peaceful persuasion, the treatment as blacklegs of men who were not blacklegs in the ordinary sense of the term, or who would be so regarded by the Executive of any respectable trades union, the too ready acceptance by responsible leaders of the doctrine that the end justified the means, even though the means included rioting, assaults on the police, intimidation, and violence practised on so-called 'officials' or permanent workers engaged in keeping the mines open, the degradation of the women-folk by allowing them to take a leading part in these and like acts of violence—all these constitute a serious indictment against trades union organisations in the district and in the South Wales coalfield. Nor is there any use disguising the fact that there is a widespread impression that the trades union concerned—the South Wales Miners' Federation—has willingly or unwillingly thrown its cloak, so to speak, over these reprehensible actions, so that, instead of punishing within its own ranks those who disgrace the labour cause by such conduct, it used its trust funds, not merely for the defence of offenders, but for the payment of the penalties imposed upon them, even in cases where no substantial denial of the offence was put forward. This may or may not be a fact, but the general impression on the point makes at least an appeal, if not a challenge, to the Federation to face the situation with courage and declare whether it is going to cast its influence on the side of law and order or on the side of violence and of much that depraves and dehumanises the men and women who participate in such violence. It is no concern of mine to enquire from what sources the penalties of

offenders are derived, whether from the charity of friends or from the trust funds of the Federation, nor, if it be from the latter source, is it for me to challenge the legality of appropriating such trust funds for the payment of fines, though I can well conceive interested parties doing so. But it is a question of the utmost public interest whether a body is habitually stepping into the breach to shield those who are found guilty of violence and intimidation from the consequences of their guilt, and, by paying their fines, relieving them of the punishment which the Court and the law intends should be borne by the offenders themselves. Any such systematic shifting of the penalty from the right shoulders to those of some other public body will inevitably result in my not giving the option of a fine in cases of assault, intimidation, or the like offence, but in sentencing those convicted to a term of imprisonment without such an option. It would be useless to inflict a punishment which would not fall at all on the culprit himself, but would be entirely found by some other person or body. . . . . Dealing with the treatment of colliery officials as blacklegs the Stipendiary added :—What other trade union—what other Miners' Federation outside South Wales—has ever regarded such men as blacklegs ? For what is a blackleg ? The term is applied to a man who works for less than the trade union rate of wages, though the term is also often used in recent times for the strike-breaker of former days : that is, a non-union man who is imported from away or taken on for the first time in the place of a striker and who works in such a way as to enable the industry concerned to be carried on as if there were no strike. The two men attacked in this case answered to neither of these descriptions. They were doing such work as strikers have hitherto raised no objection to in any previous coal strike in South Wales. If, as I think anyone would admit, the two men were not working for less than trade union rate of wages and not in any way supplanting the men who had gone out on strike—then I appeal to workmen's leaders not to brand them and others in like circumstances with the opprobrious, undeserved title of blacklegs, for the leaders must well know that once that name is fixed upon anyone it is likely to spread like wild fire in an excited crowd, to inflame those who hear and use it, and to lead to conduct of which they would be ashamed in their calmer moments. I am glad to think that the advocates who have appeared for the defence have frankly and emphatically said they neither do nor could justify the violence that occurred on the 25th and 26th July. . . . I want this repudiation of violence—if honest and genuine—to be taken to heart by every colliery worker in the district, so that, in the event of future disputes, the reputation of the Welsh collier will not be besmirched or his case injured by such organised lawlessness as made this district notorious at certain periods during the Cambrian Combine strike, ... Dealing with

the part played by women in the disturbances, Mr. Lleufer Thomas added :—"It appears that it is a woman who is really responsible for the production of a white shirt on occasions of this kind, and that women are more mischievous than the men in carrying out this cowardly sort of conduct on those who have offended them. If women thrust themselves into the fighting line in this way, and if those who are responsible for the processions of the workers allow women to disgrace and unsex themselves by lawless conduct such as this, and, indeed, accept their services, then such women must suffer the consequences, and it is only by taking care that in such circumstances they do suffer the consequences of their guilt even to the extent of imprisonment that we can hope to stamp out the very reprehensible part they play on such occasions."

In the case in which these remarks were made two men were fined the maximum penalty of £20 or two months' imprisonment ; one woman the maximum penalty of £5 or 14 days' imprisonment in the second division ; and another woman was sentenced to one month imprisonment without hard labour.

NOTE.—See page 202 for the Hon. Justice A. T. Lawrence's sentences in Rhondda Riot cases, and for his strictures on the Trades Disputes Act, at the Glamorgan Assizes, November 23rd, 1911.

APPENDIX D

Strike Relations of Police and Employers.

In consequence of a statement made by the manager of the Cynon Colliery concerning the employment of the police, and forwarded to him by the South Wales Coalowners' Association, the Home Secretary, on November 18th, wrote a long letter to the Association. In the course of it he defined the relations of the colliery owners to the police in the following terms :—

> "The owners must be aware that the police occupy an absolutely impartial position and that they are no more the employees of the mine owners than they are the employees of the strikers. They are there solely for the purpose of maintaining order and to protect each party in the dispute from violence or illegality on the part of the other, and any pretension on the part of the coalowners to control their movements or to direct their action must be repelled as strongly as any similar pretension on the part of the strikers. It is entirely in the discretion of the police and the military authorities to say where and when and in what circumstances the constables can be most usefully employed to maintain order and to protect life and property : and the Secretary of State will support the officers in command in refusing to be influenced by managers or owners who may share this manager's misapprehension as to his position and powers."

APPENDIX E.

SOUTH WALES MINERS MINIMUM WAGE DEMANDS.

At a meeting of the Executive Council of the South Wales Miners' Federation, held on Monday, October 23rd, it was decided to make the following minimum wage demands :—

(1) That the following rates of wages shall be fixed as minimum rates, inclusive of 50 per cent. above the standard rate of 1879, any increase above 50 per cent. to be added to these rates.

	s.	d.	
(2) Colliers	8	0	per day.
Timbermen and rippers	8	0	,,
Assistant timbermen and rippers	6	0	,,
Underground blocklayers and roadmen ...	7	0	,,
Hauliers (eighteen years of age and above)...	7	0	,,
Riders, ropemen, and traffic men (above eighteen)	7	0	,,
Hitchers	7	0	,,
Banksmen	7	0	,,
Assistant Banksmen	6	0	,,
Tippers	5	6	,,
Screenmen	5	0	,,
Labourers	5	0	,,

(3) The wages of boys and others not provided for in the foregoing to be graded according to age and other conditions.

(4) All workmen employed by night or on traffic shift to be paid at the rate of six turns for five nights' work, this payment to be made at the rate of a turn and a fifth of a turn for shift worked.

(5) These rates not to interfere with any higher rates paid to any of the foregoing grades of workmen.

At a meeting of the South Wales Coal Trade Conciliation Board, held on Saturday, November 4th, these demands were rejected primarily on the ground that the application for them violated the provisions of the Wages Agreement of 1910, and also because the coalowners' representatives considered the proposals were impracticable.

APPENDIX. F.

OFFICIAL LIST OF POLICE CASUALTIES IN MID-RHONDDA AND ABERDARE VALLEY STRIKES.

AT LLWYNYPIA, NOVEMBER 7th, 1910.

Bristol Contingent.

Name.	Nature of Injury.
Supt. Fletcher	Injury to head.
Insp. Rendall	Serious injury to left temple and leg.
P.C. John Roscow	Fractured thumb.
P.S. T. Amesbury	Injury to stomach, right knee, right shoulder and head.
P.S. George Dyer	Injury to knee and head.
P.C. Geo. Hazell	,, side of head.
,, Thos. Horlock	Injury to arm, chest and head.
,, Henry Hook	Injury to back, thumb, shoulder and head.
,, Clifford Randell	Injury to elbow and head.
,, A. Savigar	Contused knee and thigh.
,, Herbert Taylor	Three scalp wounds and contusion of right eye.
,, Fredk. Danniels	Injury to hand, shoulder and head.
,, Thos. Strong	Injury to hand and head.
,, Harry Hares	Injury to chest and head.
,, Thos. Cook	Injury to back.
,, Chas. Willis	Injury to hand and chest.
,, Chas. Dando	Injury to shoulder and back
,, Albert Wheeler	Injury to stomach and foot.
,, Frank Chinn	Injury to chest and legs.
,, Ernest Mogg	Contusion of right eye and back.
,, C. Harding	Contused wound left leg.
,, James Mead	Contused wound left cheek and eye.
,, — Jenkins	Scalp wound.
,, Levi Wood	Injury to back, head and hand.

Cardiff City Police.

Name.	Nature of Injury.
Insp. James Lewis	Injury left knee and head.
P.C. Chas. Chapman	Incised wound right cheek.
,, Charles Gregory	Injury to right thigh.
,, George Giles	Fractured left thumb.
,, Arthur Smith	Injury to left arm.
,, John Brampton	Injury to left shoulder.
P.S. John Wootton	Injury to left shoulder.

Swansea Borough.

P.C. Richard Mills	Scalp wound.
,, William Thomas	Incised scalp wound.
,, Cornelius Johns	Injury to head and legs from kicks.

Glamorgan County Police.

P.S. Edward Morris	Injury to right leg, hip, shoulder and left arm.
P.C. James Bowen (who had been injured at Clydach Vale early the same day while acting as mounted constable) ...	Injury to face and left leg.
P.C. George Bayliss	Injury to knee cap.
Supt. D. Morris	Contused wound left cheek.

Total—38.

AT LLWYNYPIA AND TONYPANDY, NOV. 8th, 1910.

Cardiff City Police.

P.C. Alfred Jones	Contused wound left ankle (incapacitated).
,, Edward Woodward ...	Contused wound eye aud cheek (incapacitated).
,, William Thomas	Contused wound eye and cheek (incapacitated).
,, William Henderson ...	Scalp wound.
,, Fredk. Porter	Scalp wound.
,, Joseph Hillman	Contused wound back and left ear.
,, Edgar Bridge	Scalp wound.
,, J. Hatchett	Scalp wound.
,, John Johns	Cut on forehead.
,, Geo. Watts	Bruised hip.
,, W. Hancock	Injury to knee.

At Llwynypia, &c., Cardiff City Police—continued.

Name.	Nature of Injury.
P.S. Wootton	Injury to shoulder (second injury).
P.C. Harry Green	Injury to elbow.
,, Henry Hudson	Injury to left arm and shoulder.

Swansea Borough Police.

P.C. Harold Davies	Injury to left ankle (incapacitated).
,, Thomas Williams ...	Injury to right arm.

Bristol City and Glamorgan.
Mounted Men.

Insp. Wm. Parfitt (Bristol) ...	Injury to head and chest.
P.S. Geo. Robbins ,, ...	Injury to arm, knee and leg.
P.C. Thos. Parker ,, ...	Injury to knee and leg.
,, James Gore ,, ...	Injury to legs.
,, William Bishop ,, ...	Injury to knee cap.
,, Alfred Wellin ,, ...	Injury to head.
,, Chas. Greenslade ,, ...	Injury to head.
,, Wm. Thatcher ,, ...	Injury to leg and hand.
,, Wm. Harley ,, ...	Injury to left shoulder.
,, Albert Smith ,, ...	Injury to left arm.
,, Harry Green ,, ...	Right hand badly injured.
P.S. W. Abraham (Glam.) ...	Contused wound left cheek.
P.C. Harold Lewis ,, ...	Severe injury to shoulder.
,, F. Jenkins ,, ...	Injury to arm and legs (second time injured).
P.S. W. Smith ,, ...	Injury to right knee, left arm, and both hands.
,, Thos. Harris ,, ...	Injury to right shoulder.

Glamorgan County.

Capt. Lindsay, Chief Constable	Injury to right leg and hand
Deputy Constable Cole ...	Injury to chin and right instep.
Supt. W. Davies	Incised wound right cheek.
P.C. J. D. Henry	Right wrist and fingers lacerated.
,, D. Davies	Injury to stomach.
,, Edward Amberry ...	Injuries to nose and left arm.
,, J. L. Rowe	Injury to left arm and head.
Inspector W. Hole	Injuries to right knee, right jaw and right leg.

AT THE POWELL DUFFRYN POWER STATION, NOV. 8th.

Name.	Nature of Injury.
Insp. Eben. Rees (Glamorgan)	Severely wounded on right cheek by large stone, 3 stitches put in.
P.S. Dan Griffith ,, ...	Severe wound left shin.
P.C. W. C. Howells ,, ...	Severe wound left shin and stomach injured.
,, James Evans ,, ...	Severe wound on right cheek bone.
,, Thomas Kear ,, ...	Right ear cut, skin abrasion.
,, William Purser ,, ...	Severe wound on knee cap.

Total=6.

AT PENYGRAIG, ON NOV. 21st, 1910.

P.C. Walter Wiggins (Metro.)	Concussion of the brain.
,, Frank Baverstock ,, ...	Two severe wounds on head
,, Wm. Eversfield ,, ...	Left cheek badly cut with pick handle.
,, Harry Manning ,, ...	Injuries to stomach, left elbow and shoulder.
,, W. H. Knipe (Glamorgan)	Main artery severed and severe scalp wound.
,, Charles Wilcox ,, ...	Severe scalp wound.
,, Geo. Waddington (Cardiff)	Injury to ribs and severe contusion of jaw.
Alfred Williams (Glamorgan)...	Severe injuries to knee.
A. S. James Thomas ,, ...	Injuries to both legs and body.
P.C. Rees Harries (Swansea) ...	Lacerated ear and cut forehead.
,, Gilby (Met.)	Injuries to both legs.
,, Cory ,, ...	,, to left leg.
,, Griffiths ,, ...	,, to right hand.
,, Goodfield ,, ...	,, to left arm.
,, Millerwood ,, ...	Bruised left leg.
,, Harris ,,	Injury to left arm.
,, Luscombe ,, ...	,, to right foot.
,, Schofield ,, ...	,, to hand.
Insp. Freeman ,, ...	,, stomach and head.
Insp. Mann ,, ...	,, to right leg.
P.C. Hansford ,, ...	,, to left hand.
,, Streeter ,, ...	,, to right calf.
,, Smith ,, ...	Sprained right ankle.
,, Ford ,, ...	Injury to right hand.

At Penygraig, &c.—continued.

Name.		Nature of Injury.
P.S. Murrant	(Met.)...	,, to left hand.
P.C. Pettingill	,, ...	,, to right hand.
,, Hancorn	,, ...	, to right hand.
,, Manning	,, ...	,, to left hand.
Insp. Bole	,, ...	,, to left shin.
,, Diprose	,, ...	,, to right shin.
,, Turner	,, ...	,, to right foot.
P.S. Turner	,, ...	,, to right shin.
P.C. Leatherington	,, ...	,, to right leg.
,, Adley	,, ...	,, to right ankle.
,, Roberts	,, ...	,, to right elbow.
,, Haines	,, ...	,, to nose.
,, Humphreys	,, ...	,, to left ankle.
,, Nightingale	,, ...	,, to left arm.
,, Saunders	,, ...	,, to right hand.
Insp. E. Letheren	(Glamorgan)	Struck with stones.
P.S. W. Gill	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
P.C. Goldsmith	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
,, Robert Smith	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
,, Jas. Gibbon	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
,, W. A. Jones	(Swansea)	,, ,, ,,
,, L. Kinsella	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
,, Philip Rees	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
,, John Jones	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
,, Griffith Trick	,, ...	,, ,, ,,
,, David Bevan	,, ...	,, ,, ,,

Total injured=50.

AT ABERAMAN, NOV. 22nd, 1910.

P.S Francis Brampton	(Metro.)	Bruise left ear.
P.C. Ernest Godsell	,, ...	Wound right ear.
,, Albert Saggars	,, ...	Wound right shin.
,, James Stabb	,, ...	Right thumb sprained by falling and helmet cut with a sone.
,, Saml. Prideaux	,, ...	Wound on palm of left hand stabbed with a knife.
,, Chas. Farquher	,, ...	Abrasions of both shins from kicks and left hip bruised.
,, George Pearson	,, ...	Bruised left thigh caused by a kick.
P.S. Valentine Morley	,, ...	Bruise on leg caused by stone.

At Aberaman, &c.—continued.

Name.		Nature of Injury.
P.C. George Carr	,, (Mtd.)	Wound on right cheek.
,, James Ward	,, ,,	Thumb and forefinger left hand cut.
,, John Andrews	,, ...	Bruise on back of head and helmet cut.
,, Malcolm Trueman	,, ...	Bruise on head and slightly stunned.
Chief Inspector A. J. Phillips (Merthyr)		Struck on muscle of right leg, severe swelling.
P.S. John Evans (Glamorgan)		Bruise on left leg and arm by stone.

Total=14.

AT CLYDACH VALE AND BLAENCLYDACH, MARCH 22nd, 1911.

P.C. W. Davies (Merthyr Vale)		Cut on side of nose.
,, W. J. Harpur (Treherbert)		Wound on right eye.
,, A. Morgan (Bridgend ...		Injury to ankle.
,, O'Brien (Swansea) ...		Scalp wound.
,, Evans (Swansea)		Injury to knee.

Total 5.

AT BLAENCLYDACH, MARCH 23rd, 1911.

P.C. Smith	(Mon.)	Shattered jaw (removed to Cardiff Infirmary).
,, Bullock	,, ...	Injury to face and head.
,, Creed	,, ...	Injury to left arm.
,, Davies	,, ...	Scalp wound.
,, Watts	,, ...	Injury to leg.
,, Morris	,, ...	Legs badly bruised.
,, Thorne	,, ...	Slight injury to knee.
,, Jones	,, ...	Slight injury to shin.
,, Greenslade	,, ...	Injury to hand and knee.
,, Pugh	,, ...	Injury to arm.
,, Sayce	,, ...	Slight injury to feet.
,, Harman	,, ...	Slight injury to left knee.
,, Jones	(Glamorgan)	Cut above right eye.
,, Onions	,, ...	Injury to right eye.
,, Watkins	,, ...	Contused wound right eye
,, Woozley	(Merthyr)	Injured knee cap.
,, Stubbs	,, ...	Injured ankle.

Casualties : 17.

AT BLAENCLYDACH AND TONYPANDY, MAY 4th, 1911.

Name.	Nature of Injury.
Supt. John Williams (Glam.) ...	Injury to right arm and left leg.
P.C. Thomas Edwards ,, ...	Injury to right leg.
,, John Landey ,, ...	Injury to right arm and right leg.
,, Gomer John ,, ...	Injury to right leg.
,, Reg. Squires ,, ...	Injury to hand and both legs.
A.S. David Lewis ,, ...	Injury to face and neck.
Insp. Ben Evans ,, ...	Injury to back.
P.C. A. H. Jeffrey (Devon)...	Wound right leg.
P.S. Gwilym Davies (Merth.)...	Wound right forehead and left leg.
P.C. Daniel Duggan ,, ...	Injury to mouth and cheek. and right wrist.
,, Fredk. Edgerley(Lancs.)...	Injury to left knee.
,, John Rawcliffe ,, ...	Injury right wrist.
,, John Nuttall ,, ...	Injury right wrist.
,, Arthur Prescott ,, ...	Injury left shin.
,, John Dunlea ,, ...	Injury left shin.
,, Mark Twentyman ,, ...	Injury left breast.
,, John Walker ,, ...	Injury left knee.

Tota=17.

AT PENYGRAIG, ON JULY 25th, 1911.

Insp. J. Salter (Glam.) ...	Struck on chest, bruise right shoulder, right ankle, and right big toe.
P.S. Rees Davies ,, ...	Injury to knee cap.
,, Thos. Harris ,, ...	Bruise left arm.
P.C. Robert Henry ,, ...	Bruise left ankle and centre of back.
,, William Davies ,, ...	Bruise left thigh and left foot.
,, W. J. Lloyd ,, ...	Cut right thumb, scar side of neck, bruise left shoulder and right ankle.
,, William Crowden ,, ...	Struck in stomach.
,, Reginald Squires ,, ...	Bruise left ankle.
,, Fredk. Bradshaw ,, ...	Cut left shin.
,, Dan Davies ,, ...	Bruise left shoulder.
,, David W. Rees ,, ...	Abrasion left cheek.

Name.	Nature of Injury.
P.C. Arthur Skinner ,, ...	Injury to stomach and back of neck.
,, James Russell ,, ...	Wound on left cheek.
,, J. S. Williams ,, ...	Punctured wound left knee
,, J. Stockford ,, ...	Injury to right ankle and blow on head.
,, George Osborne ,, .	Blow on right shoulder.
,, Arthur Simpkins ,, ...	Bruise on right big toe.
,, Richard Thomas , ...	Cut on face and bruise left shoulder.
,, Silas Morris ,, ...	Injury to stomach.
,, Arthur Buens ,, ...	Injury to foot.
,, John Laherty ,, ...	Injury to shoulder.
,, Joseph Watkins ,, ...	Injury to left leg.
,, William Turner ,, ...	Injury to right leg.
,, Ralph Ballard (Worcest.)	Injury to chest and neck.
,, Hammond ,, ...	Injury to right arm.
,, George James ,, ...	Wound on face and head and struck with a mandril shaft.
,, David Thomas (Cardigan)	Bruise left cheek and left shin.
,, John Charman ,, ...	Injury to arm and knee cap.
,, Moses Lloyd ,, ...	Injury to left arm.
,, Samuel Davies ,, ...	Injury to finger.
,, Fredk. Selwood ,, ...	Injury to leg.
Insp. Chas. Walker (Derby)...	Wound left shin.
P.C. Ernest Snowball ,, ...	Wound left leg.
,, John Webster ,, ...	Bruise left ankle.
,, William Clews ,, ...	Bruise right hip.
,, Walter Hudson ,, ...	Bruise right ankle.
,, Charles Bottom ,, ...	Bruises on head and back.

Total = 37.

In these official lists minor casualities, numbering over 500, have not been reported.

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